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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-PERCEPTION AND  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG NATIVE STUDENTS  
IN GRADE FIVE AND GRADE SIX

by

Connie McGregor

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
through the Faculty of Education  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Education at the  
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## ABSTRACT

The relationship between Self-Perception and Academic Achievement among Native students in grades five and six were examined. Forty-three students responded to the Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985) which was used to assess self-perception. The Self-Perception variables examined were Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Athletic Competence, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct and Global Self-Worth. Academic Achievement was assessed by the Achievement Report prepared by the students' teachers. Achievement was measured in the following academic subjects: Language Arts (Listening, Oral Language, Reading, Grammar, Written Language, Spelling, Penmanship), Mathematics, Environmental Studies (Science, Social Studies, Health), Computers, Physical Education, Art, Drama and Study Skills. Correlational analysis indicated that the only Self-Perception variable that demonstrated a significant correlation to Academic Achievement was Scholastic Competence ( $r=.341$ ,  $p<.05$ ). All Academic Achievement variables were significantly correlated with Average Academic Achievement except the Computer variable. Results indicated that a significant relationship did not exist between Academic Achievement and Self-Perception among Native students in grade five and grade six.

## DEDICATION

Thanks and appreciation to all who have helped me on this journey. My family has shown incredible support of this project. Your love and understanding have been my constant strength. A special thank you to my husband Matt who kept my feet on the ground. My advisor, Dr. Linda McKay has been one of my most patient and encouraging teachers. . Much gratitude is extended to the Grand River Post Secondary Education Office that fully supported this educational endeavour. I would not have been able to accomplish this goal without your generosity. The First Nation community that welcomed my research, I appreciate your trust. I dedicate this work to all Native students, their parents and communities. You are my motivation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. General Statement of the Problem

Historically, Native culture and identity in Canada have been negatively affected by the dominant society. The intent of the government, education system and the church to extinguish Native languages, customs and self-worth has resulted in a loss of self-worth and instilled feelings of inferiority among Native people. When Native children view themselves in a negative way, they encounter difficulties in meeting the academic, social and emotional standards set by mainstream society. Their self-perception and feelings of self-worth have been negatively influenced by repeated failures to be accepted, to achieve academically and to perform according to the standards set for and by a culture that is not their own.

The past cannot be changed but the self-perception of children can be influenced positively. When Native children have a healthy perception of themselves they are confident to take risks and achieve in all areas of their lives. It is self-perception that directly affects children's performance or behavior in specific situations. Past research has suggested that a strong relationship exists between self-perception and academic achievement. Caplin (1966) postulated that children who held more positive self-concepts and/or higher levels of aspiration had higher academic achievement. Students who felt negatively about their abilities rarely succeeded academically, regardless of their racial background. Previous research has not offered substantial evidence to support the identified relationship between self-perception and academic achievement among Native



children. It is the purpose of this study to investigate the relationship between self-perception and academic achievement among Native students in grade five and grade six in-depth and to add to the research base in the area of Native education.

In an effort to provide educators with results to address current academic programs for Native students, the current study investigates correlational data from Native children living in a Native community. This specific sample selection was necessary to generate authentic and relevant results to address current academic programs for Native students. Pepper (1986) suggested that Native students made normal or above academic gains while attending elementary schools on reserves only to fail once they left the sheltered environment. The strategies that educators utilize and the programs that they instruct, fully prepare students for success in any situation.

It is understood that children are highly regarded as the future generations in Native communities because they are the carriers of cultural knowledge. Results of this research study may directly influence the condition of Native communities. The education that Native children receive could influence their contributions to their community and assist in the creation of a self-determining society. By examining the relationship between self-perception and academic achievement among Native students, the present study extends previous research.

## B. Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms will be defined.

Achievement: the grade mean on the student's achievement report from the previous year. A number from one to twelve was assigned to letter grades beginning with D- increasing in value to A+. The individual's total score was divided by the number of scores to calculate the mean. The achievement report provided grades in the following academic subjects: language arts (listening, oral language, reading, grammar, written language, spelling, penmanship), mathematics, environmental studies (science, social studies, health), computers, physical education, art, drama and study skills.

Average Academic Achievement: the overall mean score of all academic variables.

Native Children: students who are attending an elementary school in a southern Ontario First Nations community which is the traditional homeland of the Potawatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwa people.

Self-Perception: an assessment of children's judgments of their competence in specific domains as well as a global view of their self-worth or as a person. Six subtests measured scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct and global self-esteem of children. Self-perception, self-esteem and self-worth are used interchangeably in this study.

Average Self-Perception: the overall mean score of all Self-Perception variables.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The relationship of self-perception with academic achievement and the idea that it has a strong effect on the success and failure of Native students has become increasingly relevant in the area of Native education. Native educators and researchers have attempted to find solutions to improve school success with Native children.

Pepper and Henry (1991) theorized that Native people usually based their discouragement on their evaluation of the self in a particular situation. A discouraged self-evaluation occurred when Native children did not feel adequate in a situation and did not possess the courage to deal with the challenges they encountered. Self-perception is one variable that must be further investigated for its relationship to achievement.

The relationship of academic achievement and self-perception has been referred to by Native parents in a Discussion Paper on Native Education in Alberta (1984). It was suggested that children who are proud, have their identity, know who they are and are proud will be able to encounter anything in life. This includes challenges encountered in the area of academic achievement.

#### Studies of Self-Perception

Much research has been done in exploring and developing theories and definitions of self-perception. Coopersmith (1967) stated that there were four sources of self-esteem based on previous studies and extended interviews. It was suggested that all provided a sense of increased worth when they were attained. The first source of self-esteem was the ability to influence and control others, which the researcher entitled power. The second was the acceptance, attention and affection of others. This was referred to as significance.

Adherence to moral and ethical standards was termed virtue. The fourth source of self-esteem was competence. Successful performance in meeting demands for achievement defined competence. It was noted that it was possible for an individual to attain high self-esteem by significant attainment in any of the four areas.

Fuchs and Havighurst (1972) theorized that the concept a person has of self was relevant to mental health. A definition of good mental health suggested that one perceived the self positively, had a realistic perception of the world around them, had the ability to be a part of society while maintaining individuality, had an integrated personality which included a purpose and meaning in life, tolerance for stress and the ability to recover from difficulties. The researchers studied the self-concept of Indian youth by assessing their conscious awareness of themselves and how they stood in relation to their total environment. It was hypothesized by Fuchs and Havighurst that there was not an overall decrease in self-esteem for Indian adolescents in the National Study of American Indian Education that they directed. The researchers indicated that Indian girls were more likely than boys to show a significant decrease in self-esteem from pre-adolescence to adolescence. It was also noted that Indian boys rated themselves higher than Indian girls did, at ages twelve to seventeen. There seemed to be a tendency for Indian girls to be more self-critical and self-doubting than Indian boys.

Lefley (1974) investigated the social and familial correlates of self-esteem in relation to tribal acculturation among American Indian children and their mothers. The relationship between self-esteem and specific parental practices of socialization were also investigated. The Miccosukee and Seminole children ranged in age from 7-14 years. Participants were tested on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and on a

culturally adapted version of the Word-Rating Scale. The scales were translated by five bilingual judges and taped for uniform administration. To promote comprehension and clarity, each item was administered orally in English and Miccosukee. Results suggested that although the tribes did not differ in socialization practices, both mothers and children in the less acculturated, more socially intact Miccosukee tribe had significantly higher self-esteem than the more acculturated Seminole tribe. It was observed that in both tribes, girls had a significantly higher sense of self-esteem and perceived parental love than the boys. The researcher ascertained that the self-esteem of the daughters was positively correlated with maternal self-esteem and the sons' self-esteem with perceived parental love.

Wicker (1977) investigated the relationship between racial awareness and racial identification and exposure to a strong Native American movement. Variables considered in this study included grade level and self-concept. The sample was composed of 90 Native children, 45 from the Lumbee population which represented those exposed to the Native American movement and 45 Native children from populations representative of those not exposed to a strong Native American movement. Participants were enrolled in kindergarten classes, second grade classes or fourth grade classes. Research instruments utilized included choices between drawings of Native and Caucasian children in response to a set of questions, the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and a modified version of the Black Power Ideology Scale II.

Based upon Wicker's (1977) findings, Native children were aware of race during their kindergarten and early school years regardless of exposure to a strong Native movement. Data indicated that there was no difference in the number of children who showed greater

racial identification with the Native race than children not exposed to a strong Native movement. The majority of children from both groups identified with the Native culture. It was determined that identification with the Native culture increased as grade level increased. The researcher determined no significant differences in self-concept scores between the Native children who identified with the Native culture and those who identified with the Caucasian race. It appeared that racial identification was not associated with the self-concept scores of Native children. Feelings of racial pride did not significantly contribute to the self-evaluation of Native children.

The model of self-esteem as a combination of self-worth and self-efficacy was reflected in the work of Bean and Clemes (1979). In order to have self-esteem, it was stated that children must experience four condition: connectiveness, power, uniqueness, and appropriate models. Connectiveness was found in a sense of relationships which instilled a feeling of belonging and acceptance in the culture and the family. Power was shown by a sense of accomplishment which demonstrated to the child that they were competent and successful. Feelings of being special and feelings of worthiness were validated by the values of culture and of significant others. These traits characterized uniqueness. Models referred to the development of meaningful values, goals and ideals, skills and behaviors through exposure to and observation of role-models.

Leonetti (1980) ascertained that it was important to understand the self-perception of minority children. It was asserted that their low self-esteem was primarily psychological or due to the fact that they were ethnically different. Minority children were encouraged to understand that they were not limited by their ethnicity but were at a disadvantage because they were not of the dominant society. The researcher suggested that children

needed assistance to recognize why others in their environment held distorted perceptions of them. With this knowledge and understanding, feelings of confidence increased for minority children. It was stated that minority and Anglo children who interacted frequently alleviated the distortion of perceptions held by each group. Communication with parents was the most significant influence in the lives of minority children because it provided an effective means of self-esteem enhancement. Encouragement, equal treatment and positive bi-cultural classroom experiences instilled a sense of pride and fostered a healthy self-concept in children of minority cultures.

Saracho (1980) stated that self-concept referred to a set of perceptions, ideas, and attitudes an individual had of themselves. This self-image varied somewhat from the view others had. The individual's view was built primarily on past experiences and interactions with others, which influenced the self-concept in a positive manner or in a negative manner. A positive self-concept led to a perception of oneself as important, capable of normal or above normal functioning with the ability to utilize learning experiences. A negative self-concept led to a perception of oneself as inferior or below normal, capable of functioning only at a lower than normal level without the ability to utilize learning experiences. The researcher further stated that a person's self-concept tended to remain constant over a long period of time and over a range of circumstances. From a very young age, a child sensed competence in activities that were valued by the people important to them. As a result, they sensed their value as an individual.

The purpose of Lazarus' (1982) article was to explain Native American values in reference to counseling services for elementary school students. As a result of the considerable tribal and individual differences, it was understood that a list of values for

each Native American tribe had not been developed. Some basic values of Native Americans included harmony with nature, present-time orientation, cooperation, anonymity, submissiveness, sharing and humility. It was theorized that as Indian children became more acculturated as they incorporated Anglo-American values, the child's self-concept was negatively affected. When children entered the school system, the children from the non-dominant culture compared themselves to the children of the dominant culture. The comparison was unfavorable for children from minority groups.

This finding was unfortunate as evidence consistently demonstrated that Native American children had a mean IQ comparable to the average Anglo-American child, in nonverbal or performance areas. The researcher affirmed that the effects of the Native American culture tended to decrease the motivation to succeed academically.

Incorporation of Native American values was necessary when working with Native American children. The trust and understanding of the tribal community was facilitated by this approach. When trust and understanding were established the effect of counseling was more successful.

It was postulated by Harter (1986) that children made clear distinctions between their competencies in different domains. A profile approach portrayed the complexity of their self-perceptions most accurately. Global self-worth, as a separate assessment provided an independent index of the degree that a child liked themselves. This judgement could then be correlated to self-perceptions in specific domains. A child's global sense of self-worth reflected the degree to which they were successful in those domains deemed important. Children with high self-worth had competence and importance hierarchies that were congruent. This implied that areas of high competence were very important and the



importance of domains in which the child was not so successful was abated. Children with low self-worth showed significant differences between their domain-specific competence judgements and their ratings of the importance of achievement in those domains. They seemed unable to diminish the importance of domains in which their competence was low. One specific group of children with low self-worth were depressed children. They were judged to be depressed based on their lack of energy and motivation. The children not only seemed unable to discount the importance of areas that they perceived themselves to be incompetent, but their competence judgements were quite accurate. The researcher ascertained that self-concept was not a static, trait-like construct. It was responsive to change with other significant considerations as to how well the elements of the self-concept were integrated.

Changes have taken place to positively influence the self-concept that Native people hold. Many band councils have assumed control and operation of schools in First Nation communities. Curriculum materials appropriate to the background and experience of Native children have been developed and Native teacher education programs have produced many graduates (Barman, Hebert & McCaskill, 1987). Increasingly, Native people became more politically conscious and many committed themselves to improving the lives of their people. This indicated a growing sense of self-esteem among Native people.

The cross-sectional survey design of Lamarine's (1987) study measured the relationship among self-esteem, health locus of control, and health attitudes of Native American fourth, fifth and sixth grade students. The sample of 291 consisted of 49% male and 51% female students; 39% were in the fourth grade, 38% in the fifth grade, and

23% were in the sixth grade. Results generated from the data indicated self-esteem as a significant predictor of health attitude and health behavior among Native American children. The correlation between self-esteem and health attitude decreased with age. It was suggested that younger students may be most responsive to interventions directed at improved health attitude by increased self-esteem. The researcher indicated that some children may have tried to improve self-esteem by the acceptance of undesirable health behaviors influenced by peer pressure. Self-esteem as the determinant of health attitude in Native American children was not practical unless a successful methodology was implemented to enhance their self-esteem.

Mitchum (1989) asserted that for Native students, the effects of integrating with non-Native students were not positive experiences. It was an unfavorable contrast when the Native American students compared themselves to the dominant non-Native culture. Programs designed to help Native American children increase their cultural awareness did not solve the problem. It was postulated that positive change for the group rather than for individuals within the group may have been a solution for the problems that Native American children had with low self-esteem. The researcher suggested the incorporation of harmony and cooperation in group counseling processes. Recognition that lack of eye contact indicated respect and the children's preference for nonverbal techniques was also suggested for implementation.

Pepper and Henry (1991) stated that although self-esteem is a Euro-American culture-based concept, it was relevant in understanding a person of Native descent. It was easy to lose sight of the individual as a holistic being by viewing the person as separate entities. The concept of Native culture and conditions for self-esteem were seen as overlapping

aspects of being. The researchers determined that self-esteem was different from self-concept. Self-concept was a belief that children had about themselves. It referred to the personal perceptions of life and self. A child could hold a view of themselves that did not correspond to their behavior. They could believe that they were athletic but did not participate in sports. Self-concept was considered more stable than self-esteem with changes that occurred gradually. It was self-esteem that directly affected a child's performance.

A case study by Sweet (1995) examined the grade 7/8 textbooks used in one southwestern Ontario school to determine whether the texts presented a contemporary and credible impression of Aboriginal people and cultures in Canada. The researcher argued that although textbooks were instrumental in Canadian schools, they did not reflect accurate images of Aboriginal contributions. It was postulated that intolerance and misunderstanding was fostered by the use of the examined textbooks. The researcher expressed the opinion that Aboriginal students in public school systems could have experienced problems with self-esteem due in part to the influence of textbooks in presenting inaccurate impressions of aboriginal people and cultures.

In the diagnosis of psychological problems of Native Canadians, Keshen (1996) theorized when people did not internalize norms of ideal behavior, their actions and feelings could not form a meaningful pattern from their point of view. The fragile ideal self that resulted led to apathy, anxious confusion and a sense of emptiness. It was found that this form of emptiness was evident in people whose cultures were in the process of disintegration. People who lacked sufficient self-esteem were unmotivated to move forward in their lives.

Pintrich and Schunk (1996) asserted that self-esteem should not be confused with individual's perceptions of their competence which was a more cognitive belief or judgement of personal skills and abilities. Self-esteem was a more global affective reaction or evaluation of the self. Researchers and teachers were cautioned to be sensitive to domain differences in perceptions of competence. Assumptions that students had a single global self-concept related to their performance in all domains should not be made. It was asserted that self-perceptions of competence and self-esteem were two distinct constructs. Global self-esteem was presented as an empirically separate dimension from self-perceptions of competence. There were positive moderate correlations among the two constructs.

Bosacki, Innerd and Towson (1997) investigated field independence-dependence and self-esteem in preadolescents. The researchers questioned whether gender made a difference in this area of study. The participants consisted of 63 grade six students ranging in age from 11 to 12 years. The sample of 33 girls and 30 boys were enrolled in four sixth grade classes from three schools. Participants were heterogeneous in reference to social class. Ninety-eight percent of the sample were of European Canadian descent. In this study, self-esteem was measured using the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. Witkins's Group Embedded Figures Test measured field independence-dependence. It was ascertained that girls did not have significantly lower self-esteem than boys. The girls reported slightly greater peer self-esteem and higher school self-esteem than boys. It was determined that cognitive style variations were linked to the individual's ability to display some appropriate gender role behaviors. Demonstration of specific gender patterns between field independence and self-concept suggested that differential

treatment by parents and educators reinforced assumptions about gender-appropriate roles for girls and boys.

Omizo, Omizo and Kitaoka (1998) investigated the efficacy of guided affective and cognitive imagery in the enhancement of self-esteem among Hawaiian children. The sample included 60 children from the fourth, fifth and sixth grades of one elementary school. The children ranged in age from 8 to 12 years. An experimental design was used to determine the intervention strategy effects. Ten weekly guided affective and cognitive imagery sessions comprised the intervention strategy. Guided affective imagery created an awareness and acceptance of their strengths and areas of improvement while guided cognitive imagery developed skills and accelerated mastery of cognitive material. The activities involved the children's senses and feelings. The use of guided affective and cognitive imagery to enhance self-esteem among Hawaiian children was partially supported by the results. Children in the experimental group felt better about themselves compared with the children who did not participate in the intervention strategy. They also had significantly higher scores on the sub-scale related to academic and school-related self-esteem. Teachers reported that the children in the experimental group seemed to be happier and more motivated. The children also showed more appropriate social behaviors and related better with classmates. Two months after the intervention strategy, teachers indicated that the children who participated in the group sessions continued their positive behaviors.

A study by Knox, Funk, Elliot and GreenBush (1998) identified gender differences and the correlation with global self-esteem in adolescents. Participants in this study consisted of 212 high school students from regular education classes in five high schools.

The sample was comprised of 85 males and 127 females. Of the 212 participants, 203 identified themselves as Caucasian, three as African American, three as Mexican American, one as Asian and two did not state with whom they identified. The sample consisted of 45 ninth graders, 45 tenth graders, 42 eleventh graders and 80 twelfth graders. Information about the sample was obtained using the Possible Selves Questionnaire, Hoped-For-Possible Selves Questionnaire and Feared Possible Selves Questionnaire. To assess global self-worth of the subjects, Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents Global Self-Worth Scale was administered.

Results confirmed the anticipated differences in the composition of male and female adolescent self-esteem. It was suggested that self-esteem during mid-adolescence was more multi-dimensional for girls than for boys. At this stage of development, girls were more psychologically mature than boys. This study demonstrated that self-esteem of females was related to traditionally masculine domains such as occupational functioning, physical appearance and other-oriented characteristics that were more highly stressed for females in American culture. American girls were socialized to live up to a feminine ideal standard. At the same time, masculine ideals were so highly valued by their society that females could not reasonably discount these ideals. In essence, the study demonstrated, that to have high self-esteem, girls must reach a very delicate balance between two very different sets of traits.

Another factor that was shown to influence self-esteem was participation in organized activities outside school. The Daily-Statistics Canada (2001) reported on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth: Participation in Activities (NLSCY). The comprehensive survey monitored child development and measured the incidence of

factors that positively and negatively influenced their development. In 1994/1995, parents of about 23,000 children were interviewed about their children, themselves, their families, schools and neighborhoods. Self-report data was collected from ten and eleven year old children about various aspects of themselves and their lives. From 1996 to 1999, the parents of the same children were interviewed. Data provided perspectives into the development of children and their family environments over several years. Children who participated in organized activities such as sports, music, the arts or clubs outside school had higher self-esteem, interacted better with friends and performed somewhat better in school, according to data from the NLSCY. It was noted that the relationship between participation in activities and outcomes such as self-esteem or behavior toward others was complex and difficult to measure. These relationships were clearly identified and necessitated more detailed analysis to determine whether participation contributed to certain outcomes.

#### Studies of Academic Achievement

Educational experiences of Native children must incorporate the integrity of their culture. A review of literature indicated that without positive influence about their worth, Native students withdrew from participation in education with less self-worth and were involved in a series of failures, academically and socially.

Fuchs and Havighurst (1972) stated that achievement in school subjects was widely known to be correlated with student's family backgrounds. Several reasons were suggested for family background as a disadvantage in relation to school achievement of many Indian students. The researchers generalized that the majority of Indian pupils were reared in poverty-stricken families, most Indian families had very little formal education

to assist in academic instruction of their children, many Indian families provided a non-English language environment, and many Indian students' culture was inharmonious with the demands of school. Regardless of the dismal situation, it was indicated that given the opportunities, Indian students had the strength and mental health to resolve the issues that hindered school achievement.

With a sample of 64 secondary school classes, Walberg and Anderson (1972) identified the predictive validity of a set of 15 learning environment scales that were tested in eight subject areas. The researchers established a positive relationship between cognitive learning and classes that students perceived to facilitate peer cohesiveness, assignment satisfaction, rich environment with necessary books and materials as well as facilitation of challenges. The results suggested that teaching styles and strategies that promoted group cohesiveness and challenged students to do their best were effective in increasing student achievement.

Kleinfeld (1975) developed a theoretical model that defined the psychological characteristics of effective and ineffective teachers of rural Athabascan Indian and Eskimo students. Based on a review of teacher effectiveness literature and an exploratory study the researcher indicated two central characteristics that distinguished effective teachers from ineffective teachers. The effective teacher created a climate of emotional warmth that calmed students' fears in the classroom and met their expectations of highly personalized relationships. The second characteristic was the teacher's ability to validate their own education goals with consideration of the cultural influences of the Native students. Effective teachers required high quality academic work from their students.



It was theorized by Moos and Moos (1978) that students who obtained higher grade averages were in classes that required them to be highly involved. The social environments of 19 high school classes were correlated with student absenteeism rates and with the average final grades given by the teacher in the study conducted by the researchers. It was established that the average class grades and the student absenteeism rate were related to classroom social climate. Increased achievement was evident for classes that rated high in involvement and a feeling of belonging by students. Greater achievement was related to the extent that students paid attention, showed interest and worked with their peers.

Cooper, Findley and Good (1982) reported on a study that compared the effectiveness of different measures of teacher expectations for predicting students' year-end achievement and achievement change. Thirteen female third through sixth grade teachers provided reading-expectation measures on students in their reading groups. Teacher expectations were measured based on perceived-tested ability discrepancy. Third through fifth graders completed a reading comprehension sub-test. Sixth graders completed the Mastery Reading sub-test. Achievement change was defined as the residual scores created when January achievement predicted May achievement. One implication of this study was that different definitions of expectations were not interchangeable. Perceived ability of the student and the discrepancy between perceived and tested ability were independent of the teacher's expectations. Perceived ability and the perceived-tested ability discrepancy demonstrated a significant positive relationship to achievement change.

The enculturation and acculturation of Native children was the focus of an article by Little Soldier (1985). Enculturation was defined as the process by which individual's learned their culture. This often occurred in the home with the assistance of the family. Values, attitudes, habits and behaviors of the culture were reinforced. An incompatible culture was presented to Native students when they began to attend school. A process termed acculturation required Native children to acquire a different set of behaviors that were necessary to function in the world outside their home and their family. The researcher theorized that many Native students were disinterested in school at a very early stage. For this reason, they failed to meet the expectations of the institution. Some suggestions to alleviate the conflicts encountered at school were provided.

The importance of building good group dynamics rather than emphasizing individual achievement in the classroom was stressed. The researcher suggested that if academics were difficult for some Native students, success could be attained in the arts and it was not intended that academic subjects be neglected. All students needed to acquire the competencies to adequately function in mainstream society and some Native American students found success in the aesthetic-expressive areas. It was asserted that if a Native American child was to succeed in school and participate in the dominant society, the child acquired new behaviors, kept their cultural identity, and functioned effectively in both Native and non-Native worlds.

Pepper and Henry (1986) proposed an integration of learning theories with concepts of an individual's relationship with their environment. The conditions under which learning repeatedly took place and opportunities where learning was expressed needed consideration. These conditions were often structured by the cultural and social

environment of the individual. The researchers asserted that a theory which presented a holistic view of the individual as they evolved within a social/cultural environment would be most effective. A better understanding of the Native behavioral learning style and the implications for classroom practice were suggested. It was cautioned that the uncritical implementation of only this approach would further stereotype Native children with a specific learning style. It was observed that Native students made normal or above normal academic gains while they attended a tribal or on-reserve elementary school. Once the students left the elementary environment, they failed academically. The researchers suggested that the failure could be attributed to a narrow and unadapted perspective of teaching which did not accommodate various styles of learning.

The relationship of teaching styles to student achievement was investigated by Silvernail (1986). The research suggested that teachers who implemented the principles of direct instruction increased the academic involvement time of students which led to greater achievement. It was observed that teachers who focused on academic goals, structured learning activities and provided clear academically based feedback, enhanced their student's time on task and level of achievement. The researcher concluded that elaborate teacher praise was not effective in promoting greater student achievement. Simple praise was effective when it was related to the academic task. Insincere praise was ineffective, while genuine praise enhanced achievement. Mild criticism was more effective with high socioeconomic and academic ability students while praise of behavior enhanced academic gains for low socioeconomic and academic ability students.

Research on student achievement through staff development by Joyce and Showers (1988) asserted that the center of the educator's work was student learning and while staff

development was beneficial to educators and administrators, the professional result of the staff's growth was the growth of the students. The researchers suggested that the social context that students brought to school influenced their opportunities to participate in their culture and to utilize educational outcomes. It was further asserted that the purpose of educator was to equip the student and their society with the increased ability to learn and socially interact. The purpose of staff development was to positively influence the educator's ability to engage in the interaction.

Swisher and Deyhle (1989) illustrated, with specific classroom examples, learning style and interactional style differences of various groups of American Indian/Alaskan Native youth. The researchers theorized that people perceived the world, learned about the world and demonstrated what they had learned in different ways. The enculturated values, norms, and socialization practices of the student's culture, influenced the learning and demonstration of what they had learned. Suggestions for teachers of Native students included the discussion of students' learning style with them, awareness of students' background knowledge and experiences, provision of practice time before the student was expected to perform with the acknowledgment that mistakes were understandable, awareness of a student's personal space, classroom organization to facilitate independence and cooperation. It was also suggested that student feedback be immediate and consistent. The researchers ascertained that teachers must become participants in the community and they must observe and ask questions with sincere and caring communication. Research demonstrated that teachers who implemented specific methods and strategies communicated to Indian students an attitude of understanding and caring while demanding high performance.

Cox (1990) supported the hypothesis that the child's early home background, regarding the quality of educational experience and provision, was a major determinant of the child's level of early academic achievement in school. The longitudinal study was performed in three stages. The first consisted of 52 infant children from culturally and materially disadvantaged homes and a comparison group of 52 infant children from more advantaged homes. Ratings were provided by parents on the following material and cultural aspects of the home environment: income, cleanliness of home, quality of housing, amount of play space, mother's health and stability, mother's education, social class grouping of father's occupation, availability and suitability of play materials and books, provision of cultural experiences, and level of parental interest in the child's educational development.

The ratings of the Material and Cultural factors were combined with the Home Background score. Selection of the sample was based on the combined score. Concentration was placed on linguistic and related educational skills. Teacher's rating of the children's concepts and skills in language, reading and mathematics supplemented assessment data. School behavior and attitudes were also considered. Two follow-up studies were conducted when the children were approximately 11.5 years and when they were 15.5 years.

It was established that academic achievement was determined by a stable home environment. It was proposed that the most fundamentally important aspect of the early home environment was the general degree of interest and involvement shown by the parents or caregivers in the child's educational and overall growth. It was theorized that

interventions, implemented and sustained as early as possible, and a supportive parental role established patterns of later academic development.

Bouvier (1991) suggested that for Aboriginal children to succeed in both the Native and non-Native world, quality education that set high expectations and nurtured scholastic achievement must be made available. To enhance academic success, leadership, commitment and creative resolution of socio-economic issues were necessary. The author postulated that the inclusion of an Aboriginal perspective of history and events, reflection of Aboriginal experience presently, and the recognition that Aboriginal values and beliefs were legitimate foundations to create knowledge and build communities. The view of an educational future with a critical individual and collective role for Aboriginal people was necessary to implement into conscious practice.

Kleinfeld and Nelson (1991) examined the theory that instruction adapted to the observational learning style of Native American students increased achievement. They were unable to find support for the hypothesis after a review of the educational literature. It could not be concluded that achievement increased when instruction was adapted to Native students' visual cognitive abilities. The psychological research on Native Americans' cognitive ability patterns and ethnographic research on Native Americans' observational learning style validated the theory that Native American children would do better, academically, if instruction was not so verbally based and relied more on visual and spatial abilities. The researchers did not deny that ample evidence supported the prevalence of certain learning styles in certain cultures.

As a child's ability to cope with challenges developed, their sense of effectiveness or self-efficacy also increased. Pepper and Henry (1991) stated that self-worth and self-

efficacy operated interdependently and established the self-esteem of the child. Research indicated that children with a poor sense of self-worth but an adequate sense of self-efficacy succeeded to a point yet found themselves limited in achievement as higher levels of responsibility tested their view of themselves. Children with a poor sense of self-worth and self-efficacy quickly became discouraged and gave up or acted destructively. Those with positive self-worth and self-efficacy appropriately and effectively addressed responsibilities.

Claymore-Lahammer (1992) utilized qualitative methodology to determine how Native American college students defined success in general, how they defined academic success and what factors were thought to contribute to their academic success. It was concluded that although grades and degree completion were important factors in defining the students' academic success, gaining knowledge was also a priority. The researcher observed when doing research into the retention of Native American students, previous definitions of academic success such as grade point average and degree completion, needed to be altered to accommodate additional measures of gaining knowledge.

Achievement motivation from the perspective of students and expectancy theory was presented by Weinstein (1993). Research on children's knowledge about differential treatment in school and the implications for motivation were examined. Focus was directed on the way that common practices were seen by students and how their perceptions of ability and motivation were affected. It was suggested that much was to be learned from the children as their perspectives explained what motivated them to learn. A factor that enhanced or diminished student motivation was the expectations held for

students' academic performance and the potential that these became self-fulfilling prophecies.

Weinstein established that the learning environment which facilitated an increasingly diverse population explored and appreciated pupil differences and maintained high expectations within an encompassing view of academic development qualities. It was validated that learning existed for both teachers and students as they participated in the development process and were both motivated to learn.

The Committee for Economic Development (1994) advocated that research and experience have demonstrated that the most successful schools focused on learning, sustained high expectations for academic achievement, rewarded effort and results, transmitted strong, positive values, involved parents and gave teachers the authority to make key educational decisions. It was suggested by the Committee that years of experience with school reform and extensive research provided strong evidence on the changes needed in the area of governance and management of schools to improve student achievement.

Hanson and Farrell (1995) questioned whether differences in the age at which children began formal reading instruction had any measurable impact on their schooling experiences, reading achievement attitudes, and literacy levels as young adults. The information for their inquiry was compiled from a U.S. National follow-up study of 3,959 high school seniors. Over one third of the students attended elementary schools that implemented a carefully developed beginning reading program in their kindergarten classes. Although the study included students from all backgrounds, those from at-risk backgrounds were over-represented. Significant differences were found among the



students in terms of the social class of their families and their parents' education.

Students who received the kindergarten reading instruction came from families with a lower social class background. The students exhibited superior current reading skills, had higher grades, better attendance in school, and needed significantly less remedial instruction in both elementary and secondary school.

Research which identified disparities in opportunities for school success that existed between Native and non-Native students determined that an effective strategy must be implemented to improve school programs which reflected revisions to the structure, curriculum and methodology (Common & Frost, 1994). In 1996, data established that, of 246 Native students who attended a high school on-reserve, only one Native student was in grade 13. In the non-Native population of 457 students, there were 34 students in grade 13. The need to investigate ways, beginning in elementary school, to encourage and motivate students to enter and succeed in the Advanced program in high school would lead to greater opportunities in higher education. Efforts to find alternatives to the ineffective streaming of students were necessary. The researchers theorized that Native people participated in their own oppression by the internalization of messages from the dominant culture that discredited them. As a result, the tension and resistance of Native parents and students who struggled with the schools was evident throughout the research study.

The Socio-Economic Indicators in Indian Reserves and Comparable Communities, 1971-1991 study by the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development was completed in 1997. Economically equivalent, rural, Native communities and non-Native communities were compared. Communities considered

comparable to Indian reserves were similar in terms of community size and geographic location. The analysis investigated five areas of interest: housing, education, labor force, income and general demographics. On average, there were more individuals per household on reserve than in comparable communities and in Canada as a whole. Overall, education levels on reserve increased. This was also true for the comparable communities population and the national population as a whole. Geographic location and community size explained some of the difference found in education levels on reserve compared to those of the total Canadian population. The reserve population tended to have a younger age distribution than the comparable communities and national populations. The reserve population, between 0 and 14 was 33.9%. The national population, between 0 and 14 in 1991 was 21.1% while 22.9% of those who lived in comparable communities were between 0 and 14 years of age. The results of this study had direct implications for policy-making and programming. It was obvious that the location and size of a community must be considered for comparisons to reserve populations to be relevant. This study demonstrated that academic achievement in the reserve communities and comparable communities was much lower than the national population. It was determined that more Native students did not complete school.

Turner (1998) reported on a study commissioned by the First Nations Education Council of School District No.73-Kamloops/Thompson on improving school success for First Nation students. It was based on the data that when compared with the general population, 20% more Native students performed below grade expectations in grade seven. When retested in grade nine, 22% were still below grade expectations. When compared to the general population, 9.6% more First Nation students chose courses that

led to a certificate that was easier to obtain than a more challenging course of study. The First Nations Education Council required the identification of factors that influenced these problems. It was intended that effective practices would be analyzed and recommendations made based on the research findings. Turner could not locate any comprehensive models and postulated characteristics of a successful model. Findings suggested that better methods to track the problems of First Nation students were needed, teachers must implement methods that facilitated cultural differences and the problem of reading fluency required more concentrated efforts. The researcher proposed that organizational inflexibility discouraged teachers' efforts to help students who had difficulties and the lack of First Nation perspectives in the curriculum dissuaded student success.

A study by Lee and Loeb (2000) examined whether teachers and students were influenced by the size of their inner-city elementary school. The focus was on teachers' attitudes about their responsibility for student learning. Data was used from 4, 495 teachers and 22, 599 students in grade six and eight. Data was collected through 1997 surveys conducted by the Consortium on Chicago School Research and from standardized mathematics test scores. The sample was restricted to 264 Chicago elementary schools. Hierarchical linear modeling was utilized to estimate school effects.

Schools that enrolled less than 400 students were preferred to medium-sized or larger schools that had enrollments larger than 400 students. Teachers in small schools had a more positive attitude about their responsibility for student learning. Learning was higher in schools with higher levels of collective responsibility. Teachers reported that they assumed more responsibility for student learning. Students who attended smaller schools

learned more mathematics in the school year. The researchers concluded that student achievement was directly and indirectly influenced, through its effect on teachers' attitudes.

Nye, Hedges and Konstantopoulos (2000) reported analyses of a 4-year, large scale randomized experiment on the effects of class size through the STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio) Project in Tennessee. Project STAR incorporated a wide range of educational conditions that were present in American education. Large, urban and small, rural districts were included with participants from wealthy and low income districts in the country. Results were more generalizable than smaller, more concentrated studies conducted in just one location. The study was conducted on a daily basis for 4 years. The participating elementary schools totaled 79 in 42 school districts. Random assignment of students and teachers to various class types occurred from kindergarten to grade 3. Achievement was represented by the mean mathematics and reading test scores.

The hypothesis that small classes in the early grades led to higher academic achievement was supported. The small class effects were consistent across schools which implied that small classes benefited all types of students in all kinds of schools. The effects of small classes were greater for students who experienced more years in small classes. This study provided important evidence about the effectiveness of small classes in promoting achievement. It did not state how small classes led to higher achievement.

Garavalia (2002) examined the extent to which college students' learning strategies, prior achievement and aptitude predicted course achievement. Participants for the factor analysis on the learning regulation scale consisted of 256 undergraduate psychology students. 73% of the sample identified themselves as Euro-American and 22% identified

themselves as African-American. Native American, Asian, and other were represented by 3.0%, 1.5 % and 0.7%, respectively. The sample for the identification of variables that predicted course achievement consisted of 133 students from the total sample.

Assessment of student regulation of learning was determined by a 35-item scale that was an extension of the 24-item Self-efficacy for Self-regulated Learning Scale. The percentage of total course points earned by a student indicated course achievement.

Findings indicated that each of the predictor variables was significantly related to course achievement. The researcher determined that prior grades, general organization and planning strategies, and SAT scores significantly contributed to the explanation of achievement beyond other variables. Interestingly, the contribution of general organization and planning was greater than the SAT score. It was postulated that organization and planning were teachable processes and instruction in this self-regulatory skill enhanced student achievement significantly.

Kanu (2002) researched how an improved understanding of the influence of culture on Aboriginal students' learning could result in more inclusive teaching to facilitate higher academic achievement and school retention rates among Aboriginal students. The study took place at an inner-city high school with a high Aboriginal student population. Data was collected in a grade 9 social studies classroom with 10 Aboriginal students and two teachers identified as successful educators of Native students. It was stated that individualized instruction had a positive effect on student academic achievement. For the Aboriginal students in this study, individualized instruction carried extra benefit because of its significance in communicating the warmth that the students perceived as valuable in their interactions between them and their teachers. The researcher affirmed that the

accommodation of cultural learning styles of at-risk students consistently resulted in increased academic achievement, increased attendance and retention and gains in reading and mathematics.

Curwen Doige (2003) examined the necessity of spirituality in learning and education in reference to Aboriginal philosophies and worldviews. As a non-Aboriginal public school teacher and university professor, provision of meaningful classroom learning for all students was the researcher's goal. It was proposed that a culturally appropriate education for Aboriginal students must be empowering and holistic. Students were engaged, when at a level of discussion, more emphasis was placed on who they were rather than the content of a course.

Aboriginal students internalized information and made connections to their life experiences and the harmonies in nature and their relationships. The following principles were presented as influential to Aboriginal curriculum and pedagogy: the acceptance and validation of Aboriginal belief systems as a basis for learning, the facilitation of a relational and safe learning environment and the promotion of authentic dialogue. It was suggested that spirituality in learning and education was essential in making education culturally appropriate. Curwen Doige postulated that this type of education must be facilitated by teachers who aim to be authentic and effective educators of Aboriginal students.

Demmert and Towner (2003) recognized that the availability of quantitative research literature and experimental studies on culturally based education programs for Native American children were very limited. In their report, *A Review of the Research Literature on the Influences of Culturally Based Education on the Academic Performance*

of Native American Students, research literature was reviewed to determine whether there was a direct relationship between a culturally based education curriculum and improved academic performance among Native American students. The report identified that the Native American interest in promoting the continued development of traditional language and cultural priorities through education programs was clearly supported by federal policies.

A significant amount of qualitative research for both Native Americans and other ethnic and racial groups that support their community interest to include language and cultural priorities existed. The researchers re-established that there was a relationship between participating in culture and learning, remembering, talking, and imagining the tool kits by which the world was constructed and the conceptions of identity and power, according to Bruner (as cited in Demmert & Towner, 2003). It was suggested that the challenge presented may be one of how to build upon culturally based education interventions as part of the process that facilitated improved academic performance and citizenship.

#### Studies of Self-Perception and Academic Achievement

The relationship of self-perception and academic achievement has been the subject of many early studies. Durr and Schmatz (1964) investigated personality characteristics which differentiated gifted children who were reading at their fullest potential from those who were not reading at their ability level. The sample for this study included all of the fourth, fifth and sixth grade children who attended public schools in a mid-western American city. The participants represented 104 different classrooms in 20 elementary schools. The Lorge Thorndike Non-Verbal Intelligence Test determined giftedness of the

participant. The California Achievement Test was administered to the gifted students. High achieving gifted students were those who scored at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading achievement. Students who scored at or below the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading achievement were considered low achieving gifted. In total, 47 were high achievers and 34 were low achievers. The California Test of Personality, the Mental Health Analysis and the Junior Inventory determined the personality characteristics of the children.

The researchers reported that underachievers withdrew more and tended to lack self-reliance, a sense of personal worth, a sense of personal freedom, and a feeling of belonging. Low achieving gifted children demonstrated behavioral immaturity, emotional instability, and feelings of inadequacy when compared to the high achieving gifted children. Generalizations about the attributes of the low achievers were concluded from the significant differences on the Junior Inventory. In comparison to the high achievers, they had poorer attitudes toward school, less satisfaction with school work and a feeling that their needs were not likely to be fulfilled at school. The low achieving gifted students were more likely to be afraid, worry and have feelings of personal inadequacy. The comparisons were descriptive only and no causative relationships were evident. It was not determined that deficient personality patterns caused low achievement or that low achievement caused deficient personality patterns.

Campbell (1965) examined the relationship between achievement, measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and self concept, measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. A population of fifth and sixth grade students were included in the study. Both tests were administered to the students as well as the Test of Primary Mental Abilities which measured intelligence. A Teacher Judgement of self-concept level was also



obtained on a four point scale. Retest data was collected to examine the reliability and validity of the self-concept instrument, the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory was administered one year later.

The data supported the hypothesis that self-concept and achievement for fourth, fifth and sixth grade students were related. The correlation was .308. The null hypothesis was rejected at the one percent level of confidence. The relationship between the school related aspects of self-concept and achievement appeared to be related. For a large number of very low achievers, the relationship between self-concept and achievement was reversed. This finding indicated a low self-concept among students with a low level of achievement.

The relationship between self-concept and achievement differed significantly between the boys and girls. There was a greater degree of relationship between self-concept and achievement for boys than for girls. The mean score for school associated self-concept appeared to be significantly larger for the girls' group than the boys' group. The implications of this finding suggested that the school environment was more supportive to girls than to boys.

Analysis of the validity of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory showed a consistent relationship from one administration to the next. There was considerable variation in the subjects' performance. Teacher judgement of self-concept did not show significant results when the effects of achievement were removed. Campbell concluded that the Self-Esteem Inventory consistently measured an underlying set of variables that were not stable over an extended time period and the Teacher Judgement of self-concept

reflected a different underlying variable than self-concept measured by self-concept instrument. The common variable between the two appeared to be achievement effects.

This study was an effort to discover methods of improving school achievement, particularly where under-achievement in terms of ability, existed. It was determined that schools could not operate with achievement as the only focus. Consideration should be given to the assessment of the non-achievement effects of instructional methods. Schools concerned with the improvement of self-concept may effectively utilize the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory as a part of a battery of tests other than achievement and ability testing. Findings related to the differences between the boys' group and the girls' group suggested that efforts to improve self-concept had a greater chance of affecting the achievement of boys than the girls. The alteration of instructional methods to accommodate the structure and source of boys' self-concept could change their perception. It was postulated that a high level of self-esteem was more significant to achievement in fourth and fifth grades than in the sixth grade. The researcher suggested that the reason may be caused by the decreased degree of dependence upon the teacher as a significant person as the student proceeded through school.

There was early evidence that poor reading ability was closely related to feelings of personal worth. Zimmerman and Allibrand (1965) investigated the personality characteristics and attitudes toward achievement of two groups of school children who were at different levels of reading ability. Participants in this study consisted of 71 remedial readers and 82 good readers, referred to as the contrast group. The children were urban fourth and fifth graders of middle to lower socioeconomic status. Half of the

subjects were of Mexican descent. Twice as many boys as girls were represented in the remedial group. The same proportion was evident in the contrast group.

The California Test of Personality was administered to both groups as a measure of personal and social adjustment. As a measure of attitudes toward achievement, each child told a story after reading a section of the Thematic Apperception Test. The researchers concluded that good readers, when compared to poor readers, were more likely to describe themselves as well adjusted and motivated by internalized impulses to strive for success. The good readers appeared to have an excellent grasp of the aspects of adjustment and motivation highly regarded by teachers and school psychologists. They wanted to present themselves in this favorable way. The poor readers admitted to feelings of discouragement, inadequacy and nervousness. They lacked a sufficient sense of personal worth, freedom and stability to the extent that they avoided achievement.

Caplin (1966) elaborated upon academic achievement and its relation to self-concept and level of aspiration. The sample for this study consisted of 30 White and 30 Black fourth grade students. There were 39 White and 39 Black fifth grade subjects, and 21 White and 21 Black sixth grade participants. It was hypothesized that children who attended segregated schools had less positive self-concepts and lower levels of aspiration than children who attended desegregated schools. It was established that there was a significant positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement and between level of aspiration and academic achievement. Children who held more positive self-concepts and/or higher levels of aspiration had higher academic achievement. It appeared that the influence of the self had no racial boundaries. Students who felt

negatively about their abilities rarely succeeded in school, regardless of their racial background.

Brookover, Erickson and Joiner (1967) reported on a third study which represented one phase of a six year study on the relation of self-concept of academic ability to school achievement among students in the 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The basic premise was that academic behavior was limited by the student's self-concept of their ability. It was postulated that self-concept resulted from the expectations held by significant others as perceived by the student. Academic success appeared as deeply rooted in concepts of the self as in measured ability, if not deeper. The researcher's extensive study concluded that human ability, as the most important factor in achievement, was questionable. The research postulated that the student's attitudes limited the level of achievement in school.

A constant and significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement was demonstrated by Purkey (1970). This relationship appeared quite clear for boys, but less for girls. Differences in gender did not seem to influence the relationship between the self and achievement, especially in the area of underachievement. It was suggested that male underachievers had more negative self-concepts than female underachievers. While some students with high self-concepts of ability failed to succeed in school, other students, especially the socially disabled, believed that they had the ability to succeed in school but viewed school as irrelevant and/or threatening. The successful student held positive self-concepts and worth as an individual. This was in contrast to the self-image of the unsuccessful student. The researcher stressed a strong reciprocal relationship between self-concept and

achievement. It was assumed that the enhancement of self-concept was a vital influence of academic improvement.

The National Study of American Indian Education was completed in 1971 under the direction of Fuchs and Havighurst (1972). In the study of self-esteem among Indian students, only a slight relation to achievement was observed. This finding did not support the position that a student who did well in school usually had a positive self-image and higher self-esteem than others who did less well in school. It was postulated that Indian students differed as a group from non-Indian students in their motivation for school. The Indian students appeared to be less invested, psychologically, in school work than non-Indian students from a middle-class background. While middle-class non-Indian students appeared to view school achievement as an important aspect of their being, Indian students viewed school achievement as a separate entity that did not greatly influence personal feelings of self-esteem.

Techniques designed to enhance an individual's sense of identity and self-esteem were presented by Canfield and Wells (1976). The activities were tested in a variety of classrooms from kindergarten through college. It was postulated that a child's self-concept was well-formed before they entered school. Reactions to learning, to failure and success in school as well as the physical, social, and emotional environment was determined by the beliefs and attitudes that they held. The position was affirmed that the relationship was very strong for boys. Evidence as early as the first grade were presented, while difficulties experienced in the early school years were consistently present for the child.

It was hypothesized that self-concepts had the capacity to change, change took place gradually and slowly, change to central belief systems had a significant impact, the relating of successes and strengths was important, as was the creation of a mutually supportive and caring classroom environment. A teacher's ability to enhance a student's self-concept were limited when trust and openness were not established.

Maruyama, Rubin and Kingsbury (1981) employed causal modeling techniques to examine the relationships among social class, ability, educational achievement, and self-esteem. The longitudinal study facilitated in-depth examination of interrelations between self-esteem and achievement for four samples of 715 children. The children were between the ages of 4 and 15 when the measures were collected. Extensive self-esteem measures included three specific areas identified by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. Academic performance measures were taken from student files rather than self-reports several times to demonstrate that performance did not occur before self-esteem.

It was determined that social class and ability were strongly related and shared a substantial variance that made it difficult to separate their influence. Achievement was found to be highly stable across the 9-15 age range. It was suggested that ability did not have any influence on achievement. The researchers argued that self-esteem was directly affected by ability and social class rather than previous achievement. Grades represented a less accurate measure of school learning than standardized tests but seemed more likely to influence self-esteem. The researchers asserted that grades were a more prominent benchmark of performance for children than standardized test scores.

This study (Maruyama, Rubin & Kingsbury, 1981) established that achievement and self-esteem were not causally related to each other. Analyzing academic self-esteem separately would not change the findings or conclusions. It was postulated that by changing the self-esteem dimension would not modify the stability of the achievement dimension. Self-esteem, however defined would not cause achievement. It was acknowledged that self-esteem data was limited to a single wave of self-report measures. The researchers implied that it was possible to find contrary results when self-concept was operationalized in a different way or by measuring self-esteem over an extended period of time.

In an article that discussed urban Native education in Alberta, Campbell (1983) elaborated upon one of the most comprehensive, culturally relevant and effective programs in Canada. A goal of the Sacred Circle Project was the promotion of a positive self-concept among Native and non-Native students and their families. Another goal was the creation of an educational environment that encouraged participation of Native students to their graduation. Other Native education initiatives emphasized experiential learning that reflected the students' lives rather than emphasis on non-Native values and culture. The creation of an educational experience that integrated Native life into a meaningful academic and social program enhanced the probability of Native students becoming more successful in school and in later endeavors.

It was established that Native children required education that facilitated positive self-concept and a strong belief in their own worth as people and as learners. Without positive reinforcement, Native students' self-worth diminished which resulted in educational and societal failures. Campbell (1983) stated that the education of Native children should

fully prepare them to excel in any aspect of society. The researcher concluded that success instilled pride in oneself and in the system that facilitated success.

Pottebaum, Keith and Ehly (1986) attempted to determine the presence and direction of the causal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement. The researchers used a cross-lagged panel correlational technique and applied it to a longitudinal study of 23, 280 American students during their sophomore and senior years. The model used to analyze the data represented the most adequate method to collaborate longitudinal data. Each subject completed a 35-page questionnaire and a series of standardized ability and achievement tests. The areas covered by the questionnaire included background, school activities, out-of-school activities, attitudes, post-high school plans and aspirations. The self-concept and academic achievement variables used in the analysis were compiled from these items and test score. Academic achievement was a weighted average of each student's scores on standardized tests in reading, mathematics I and II, science, writing and civics education. A single achievement score for each student was calculated for their sophomore and senior year.

Data indicated that there was not a causal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement and that one or more variables were causally predominant over both self-concept and academic achievement. The researchers suggested that social class and ability could possibly be prevalent over both achievement and self-concept. It was concluded that educators should not focus on the development of general self-concept as a means to enhance academic achievement. In an educational environment, the two variables would be effectively addressed as two separate and unrelated aspects.



Ancient cultures once prepared children for their roles within the family and tribe. The attempt to destroy Native American cultures created a profound loss of identity which resulted in numerous difficulties within tribes. Developmental problems that existed for children in many American Indian reservations often resulted from the inability of parents to nurture the infant, to encourage the school-age child or to provide adequate adult models for adolescents (Berlin, 1987). Problems such as alcoholism, inhalant and drug abuse, depression, suicide, and lack of achievement in school were largely related to childhood development failures. Initiatives to prevent or deal with these developmental issues were implemented. Each intervention was designed to enhance the development and positive self-image of the child, adolescent or adult. There was an integral determination to return to the traditional ways of relating and living together to increase positive self-image and sense of achievement.

Pepper and Henry (1991) validated a student's concept of their ability as it appeared to be an important limiting factor of achievement. In reference to school ability, many Native children had poor self-esteem. A discouraged self evaluation occurred when Native children felt inadequate in a situation. As a result, the children had limited ability to cope with the challenges encountered in the situation. Many Native children believed that they had little possibility of meeting challenges. With this understanding, change in achievement and self-esteem were obtainable when parents and teachers worked directly with the children. The children looked to others in their life to validate or contradict their significance. Successes and problems in coping with the range of demands across independent and cooperative situations were fundamental in the child's feelings of self-

esteem. A child's sense of worth as a human being were developed by parents who valued them and offered an appropriate and nurturing environment.

Newman (1991/1992) asserted that there was a significant relationship between self-concept and school achievement. Classroom behavior was directed by personal guidance systems that served as the students' perception of themselves as learners. The researcher postulated that the self-concept of students as learners was a critical part of their academic performance. A professional understanding of the self-concept joined with interpretation skills of how students viewed themselves as learners were important mechanisms. Children with good self-esteem viewed themselves as capable learners. They believed in their own academic ability and felt a sense of pride in their achievements.

A model of self-worth based on theoretical views of student motivation was presented by Covington (1992). The researcher's empirical evidence proposed understanding of self-worth in school contexts. The need for self-worth was presented as a basic need for all individuals. This need was represented by the universal search for self-acceptance. In American society, worth for school-age children was often dependent upon their academic achievement. The extent that children internalized or accepted this general value of society, their self-worth would be determined by their school achievement.

The researcher suggested that the need for self-worth developed a variety of motivational beliefs and behaviors. It was postulated that children and adults made attributions to ability for their accomplishments because it increased self-worth more than attributions to hard work. Individuals often hid the amount of effort they put into a task to appear to have high ability to others. To protect their self-worth, students engaged in self-

handicapping patterns of behavior such as procrastination. It was likely that they would not be as successful as they could be when they waited until the last minute to do the work. The behavior was self-handicapping because performance was lower than possible.

From a self-worth and attributional perspective, procrastination protected self-worth because students did not have to conclude that they lacked ability. If they did well and procrastinated, students concluded that they had a high level of ability. The researcher combined the self-worth perspectives with the attribution theory and demonstrated the complexity of the self-worth construct.

It was stated by Bosaki (1995) that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators could help to break the destructive cycle that involved negative self-concept, poor academic achievement and learned helplessness in Aboriginal students when they worked together. It was established that positive expectations, constant questioning of cultural labels and the avoidance of educational resources that perpetuate negative stereotypes prevented self-fulfilling prophecies from occurring. Aboriginal students should be provided the opportunity to develop to their potential with a positive sense of self by participating in educational programs that incorporate both affective and cognitive components. The researcher further ascertained that Aboriginal educational programs should foster high expectations, develop self-respect and be implemented by caring and culturally aware educators.

Gordon (1995) examined the relationship between academic achievement, ethnic and racial identity development and self esteem for Native American students from grades seven to twelve. It was demonstrated that there was no correlation between the overall aspect of self esteem and academic success, although the scores approached significance.

The researcher suggested that this study identified a weak relationship between the total self esteem score and academic achievement rather than a significant correlation. When no relationship was observed between self esteem and the area of interest, the impact that other variables had on the measurement of self esteem were considered. Gordon further postulated that the importance of academic achievement to the chosen population must be determined as it cannot be assumed that if the researcher valued the construct, the population valued it too.

Helmke and van Aken (1995) attempted to validate the interrelation of self-concept and academic achievement based on empirical evidence collected during the elementary school period. The researchers compared the differences in the causal pattern that developed from marks versus test performance as measure of achievement. The sample of 697 students from 54 elementary school classes were from urban and rural regions in and around Munich, Germany. This study was a component of a four year longitudinal project termed SCHOLASTIC (School Learning and the Socialization of Talents, Interest and Competencies).

Data presented mathematics as the domain of academic competence because the instruments were most comprehensive for this area. Mathematic achievement was analyzed in the form of mathematics test performance and math marks. Self-concept of academic ability in mathematics was analyzed by the students' self-evaluation of paper-and-pencil tasks and mental arithmetic skills, the ability to solve math word problems and an overall self-evaluation of competence in mathematic in general. The mathematics test and student questionnaires were administered annually to the classroom groups. Self-concept questionnaires and mathematics tests were given before the marks were given.

It was postulated that the most realistic and most complex model clearly supported the skill-development model. It indicated that during the elementary school years, self-concept was a consequence of cumulative achievement-related success and failure. It did not have a significant impact on later achievement based on marks or on test performance. The researchers suggested that models which included only grades or test scores indicated the effects on self-concept on achievement. The model that included both grades and test scores did not indicate effects of self-concept on achievement. The mechanisms responsible for this effect were not known and suggested further in-depth study focused on the dynamics of the shared relationship between the various components of academic achievement.

It was observed by Steinhauer (1995) that there was a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure deeply engrained in Native students' perspectives. The researcher suggested that many students appeared to be uninterested, lacked the desire to succeed and seemed to follow the behavior of others. It was observed that Native children did not like competition, especially in reference to academics when individual excellence was perceived as a threat to group equality. The researcher presented that to improve overall achievement, some degree of group competition must be accommodated. It was hypothesized that success in an Aboriginal school was dependent upon attitude and respect. Attitude referred to the teacher's approach, style, language, expectations and sense of humor. It incorporated the teacher's experiences and philosophy. Respect was referred to as a direct reflection of the teacher's inner self. It was representative of the way friends, family, elders and the environment were treated. For students, respect implied that decisions made by elders, including the teacher, were not questioned.

Respect never exerted a sense of superiority over others. It was suggested that teachers of Aboriginal students, must gain the children's respect as a person, not just as a teacher.

Van Hamme (1995) hypothesized that it was essential that the education of American Indian students be established on the rich cultural heritage that they bring to the classroom. This was necessary to develop the sense of pride that was critical to personal and cultural identity and academic success. The education of American Indian students must prepare them to function in the world of the encompassing pluralistic society as well as in their tribal community. Students who perceived classroom experiences as irrelevant to their culture and their future contributed to the situation in which American Indian students had the lowest levels of academic achievement and the highest dropout rates in the United States. The researcher suggested that lack of education produced weak economic and political foundations in the tribal community.

Strategies were identified based on the students' cultural strengths. These included the use of teaching methods that were harmonious to the cultural learning and communication styles, and the integration of cultural concepts with curriculum developed for competence in the larger society. Recognition and inclusion of cultural achievements and historical contributions of American Indians to the tribal community and the larger society were other suggested strategies. Support for all aspects of a child's culture in the classroom provided a rich learning environment in which American Indian children developed an understanding of how their education contributed to a better quality of life for their tribal communities.

Covington (1992) established that the need for self-worth was a basic need for all individuals. This need was represented by the universal search for self-acceptance. In

American society, worth for school-age children was often dependent upon their academic achievement. The extent that children internalized or accepted this general value of society, their self-worth would be determined by their school achievement.

Drapeau (1996) investigated the relationships between the degree of visual impairment in children and adolescents in the areas of intelligence, academic achievement and self-esteem. A total of 57 children between the ages of 9 and 17 years participated in this study. The participants had been identified as moderately visually impaired with visual acuity between 20/70 up to 20/200. Two groups were formed: children/adolescents with a moderate visual impairment without other handicaps and children/adolescents with moderate visual impairment with other handicaps. The parents identified the presence of other handicaps such as language deficits, motor impairment, and seizures. The intellectual functioning of the participants were measured using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III. Academic levels were assessed using the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test and the Word Attack sub-test of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests. The Piers-Harris Self-Concept for Children measured the students' self-esteem level. A structured questionnaire, the Personal Interests and Concerns Interview, created by the researcher, was also responded to by the participants.

It was determined that children who performed better on academic measures reported higher levels of self-esteem than children who performed less. There was also a high number of children with moderate visual impairment who functioned academically below expected levels in terms of intellectual ability. Self-esteem and perception of intellectual and school status were found to be higher in children with better vision than in children who had more extensive visual impairment. In the area of self-esteem, children in both

groups reported feeling good about themselves. Lower levels of perceived peer acceptance were reported compare to levels of perceived competence in other areas. For a large number of the participants, the presence of a visual impairment was a major aspect of their life experience but their interests and concerns were very similar to those of children with normal vision.

Pauls (1996) concluded that Native people have accepted many of the racist stereotypes of themselves and suffer from low self-esteem and negative feelings about their culture and themselves. It was stated that the education that Native people have received in the past, has been inferior and designed by the dominant society to assimilate and acculturate Native people. As a result, generations of Native people have not developed the self-confidence to cope with an independent existence in adulthood. Cultural conflict, alienation, poor self-concept and a lack of preparedness were issues of contention. When Native children attended an off-reserve school, their self-concept was assaulted. It was assumed that their First Nation education program was inferior and that Native children must also have learning difficulties. Native beliefs and customs were seen as inappropriate and the children were forced to accept a foreign belief system as superior to their own.

Some changes have taken place within the education system. Native schools often implemented the provincial curriculum with modifications to meet the needs of the local students. Schools hired more Native teachers as role models for the students and the implementation of Native language and culture was evident. Native people have made attempts to restore their self-concept and pride, practise their languages, reaffirm their traditional beliefs and represent their right to govern themselves.



Elias et al. (1997) postulated that healthy self-esteem developed when children were given confidence, competencies, chances and caring. The researchers suggested that children needed adults around them to inspire their confidence to learn, accomplish and interact successfully. Children needed adults around them to create chances for skills to be used, and to learn in the protected and supervised school environment. Experiences needed to be created to facilitate the competencies necessary for academic and social success. When each student felt valued as a meaningful member of the class and school, they were more likely to respond with caring toward themselves and others when they were shown similar behavior. There was a strong relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and student's general behavior and academic performance in school. Opportunities for students to experience success, positive reinforcement and validation of their worth in a challenging and nurturing environment were necessary.

A study conducted by Hay, Ashman and van Kraayenoord (1997) investigated the influence of achievement on academic self-concept and to compare the Perception of Ability Scale for Students (PASS) with the Self-Description Questionnaire-1 (SDQ-1). The 479 students involved in the study represented 18 Australian primary schools at the Grade five level. The researchers determined that both the PASS and the SDQ-1 reflected similar students' perceptions of academic self-concept. These perceptions were different from students' perceptions associated with non-academic domains.

It was identified by the researchers that the difference for mathematics, reading and spelling performance and the class academic mean predicted the student's academic self-concept. By graphing each regression equation, the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement was demonstrated. The intra-class findings established that a

student's academic position in-class had a significant influence on the formation of academic self-concept. It was determined that achievement test data and teacher ratings produced similar results and supported the use of both measures as valid in self-concept research.

Confirmation of the social environment as a significant variable that influenced self-perceptions was ascertained. The researchers suggested further research of the effectiveness of teacher actions to enhance the social environment of students. Some suggestions included the encouragement of cooperation, rather than comparison and competition within the classroom, and facilitation of discussion, reflection and exploration rather than a final grade for the completion of a task. Student comparison of their prior performance with their present level of performance as a means of monitoring their achievement was another suggestion. An understanding that students who transferred to a different school had to adjust their self-concept based on feedback from their new peers was stressful for some students and should be considered to enhance the students' social environment.

Bissonnette (2000) examined the relationship between self-concept, home environment and academic achievement of elementary school children. Home environment variables measured included television viewing, parental involvement and socioeconomic status (SES). Seventy eight children from grades 4-7 responded to self-report measures on television viewing, self-concept and parental involvement. Parents responded to the same parental involvement scale. SES was determined by parent education and occupation. Academic achievement was based on teacher report and student self-report. Results supported the hypothesis that self-concept was significantly

related to academic achievement. Relationships found between parental involvement, television viewing, SES, and academic achievement were not significant. SES was positively correlated with self-concept and father involvement was negatively related with self-concept. As father involvement increased, the child's self-concept became less favorable. The findings validated past research and supported the hypothesis of self-concept as a notable factor of a child's overall academic achievement.

Colvin (2000) stated that researchers had not found a stable relationship between self-perception and academic achievement. Several studies suggested a lack of convincing evidence that efforts made to increase self-esteem resulted in higher academic achievement. In the preoccupation with academic achievement and test scores, the fact that a significant number of students were seriously at risk, were overlooked. While it was observed that programs at the middle school level were effective, it was essential that elementary schools implemented programs that enhanced self-esteem. By Grade Three, students had established behavior and learning patterns that influenced the course of their school career. The increased level of the at-risk student population and the rise in student depression, aggression, anger and emotional needs directed an enhanced role of schools. The researcher further stated that schools must take a proactive role to address the social and emotional needs of students in addition to the development of cognitive skills.

Samms-Vaughan, Ashley-Jackson, Lambert, Russ, and Ashley (2001), described the self-concept of Jamaican children and examined the relationship between self-perception, school performance and behavior. The sample size was 1720 students between the ages of 11 and 12 years. Self-concept was illustrated by Harter's Self-Perception Scale. School achievement was determined by the Wide Range Achievement Test. It was found that

low self-concept adversely affected child outcomes, but high physical self-concept also appeared to be associated with poor outcomes. Children depended on their physical appearance to increase their self-esteem when they were unable to perform at school. Children perceived that their physical appearance extinguished the need to become academically competent.

Alves-Martins, Peixoto, Gouveia-Pereira, Amaral and Pedro (2002), analyzed strategies that protected self-esteem when it was threatened by a negative self-evaluation of school success. Data was collected from students from the seventh to the ninth grades. It was determined that there were no differences between the self-esteem felt by students with high levels and those with low levels of academic achievement in the eighth and ninth grades. In the seventh grade, students with low levels of achievement had lower self-esteem. The researchers speculated that academic results represented a vital role in the self-esteem of younger adolescent . Students in the eighth and ninth grades demonstrated maintenance of their self-esteem at acceptable levels despite poor academic performance. Less importance was ascribed to school-related areas by students with low levels of academic achievement. The researchers considered this tendency to contribute to the protection of self-esteem felt by the eighth and ninth graders. It was observed that attitudes toward school among students with high levels of academic achievement was more positive than those felt by students with low levels of achievement. In the eighth and ninth grades, negative attitudes toward school assisted low achievement students to value themselves, although their academic results were poor. Students in the seventh grade who had low achievement did not maintain their self-esteem by adopting negative attitudes towards school.

Antone (2002) affirmed that Aboriginal esteem is enhanced when traditional knowledge and values were incorporated into the education of Native students in the school system. It was suggested by the researcher that one must be in balance to have a positive self-identity which is necessary for academic success. Results indicated that Aboriginal people recognized the need for a strong identity to maintain an equilibrium between their society and mainstream society. One of the primary goals was the development of programs that facilitated a positive identity for the Native student because education was an integral agent of socialization in the community.

The research study by Hinkley, McInerney and Marsh (2002) sought to validate the foundation of Navajo high school students' positive and negative ability beliefs within a model of achievement motivation. A total of 529 students participated. Background variables included language spoken at home, living location, and gender. The notion that the individual with a stronger social identity would more likely achieve at school, was not supported as a result of this study. Researchers suggested that schools address the contrary effects of students viewed in a negative way by investigating ways in which the associated consequences may be prevented. It was speculated that as a counterpoint to Navajo high school students' negative ability beliefs, emphasis placed on students' positive ability beliefs generally benefitted their achievement.

Jefferies and Singer (2003) explored the use of culturally relevant practices by educators and the responses of three American Indian students to these practices in one alternative school at the secondary level. The case study method was utilized with a specific focus on the school as the unit of analysis. The school was established to reflect a philosophy of values that promoted a sense of community, self-esteem, ethnic pride and

identity, and an appreciation of all cultures and their relevance in society. Culturally integrated curricula and coordinated community services that met the students' needs were utilized. These aspects were viewed as the basis of the alternative high school model while the prioritization of student needs created an environment where barriers were address and resolved. Data revealed that significant factors, which occurred simultaneously, contributed toward American Indian student achievement. These factors included small school size, flexible school formats, governance structures and culturally responsive teachers. It was suggested that the methods implemented served as models for traditional public schools whose formats were unsuccessful in addressing the needs of students from all backgrounds and ethnic groups.

Ma (2003) applied student and school characteristics to explain differences among students and schools regarding students' sense of belonging to school. Survey data from 6, 883 grade six students in 148 schools and from 6,868 grade eight students in 92 schools in New Brunswick, Canada represented populations of students rather than samples of students. Students completed achievement tests in mathematics, science, reading, writing and a student questionnaire. Student characteristics included gender, socioeconomic status, Native status, number of parents, number of siblings, academic achievement, self-esteem and general health. School characteristics included size, socioeconomic mean, academic press, disciplinary climate and parental involvement. The researcher established a relationship between students' self-esteem and their sense of belonging.

Self-esteem was the most important predictor of sense of belonging, with consistent effects in grade six and eight. It was postulated that students who had a greater feeling of

worthiness appeared to feel more comfortable in their schools than students who felt less worth. Students with good health seemed to have more incentive to participate in academic, athletic and social activities in school than students with poor health. Participation in school activities was the most important contribution to the students' sense of belonging to school.

Many educators and administrators believed that Native students were more negative in their sense of belonging to school than non-Native students. It was proposed that once self-esteem and health status were considered, Native students did not have more negative sense of belonging to school than non-Native students. It was affirmed that teachers maintained a critical role in developing students' sense of belonging because school climate characteristics were controlled by school staff. It was hypothesized that academic achievement was not crucial to student's sense of belonging to school.

The need for continued effort to investigate the relationship of self-perception and academic achievement was supported by a review of literature. It was found that gender, family background, teaching styles, learning styles, class size, culture and self-esteem influenced academic achievement in the sample populations. Many of the reviewed works for this study were completed several years ago which suggests the need for current research in this area. Further study in this area with Native children is essential to the development of effective academic programs. To Native people, identity, pride and positive self-perception are one and the same. These are crucial to achievement in school and in all aspects of life.

### C. Research Question and Hypothesis

Based on the reviewed literature, a significant relationship between self-perception and academic achievement is evident. This relationship has not been clearly established for Native children in grades five and six. The research question to be addressed asks: is there a correlation between self-perception of fifth and sixth grade Native students and academic achievement?

Findings specific to gender differences and academic achievement necessitate inquiry into the relationship between self-perception and academic achievement for boys and girls. The effect of grade level on the specified relationship is an interesting question to investigate. Existing literature has indicated that the correlation is greater at the lower grade level. Some aspects of self-perception may have a greater influence on academic achievement than others. The question of which components are influential, will be answered.

Hypothesis 1: It is hypothesized that there will be a statistically significant relationship between self-perception of fifth and sixth grade Native students and academic achievement.

Hypothesis 2: It is hypothesized that there will be a significantly greater relationship between self-perception and academic achievement for girls than boys.

Hypothesis 3: It is hypothesized that there will be a significant relationship between self-perception and academic achievement with a larger correlation at the grade five level.

Hypothesis 4: It is hypothesized that there will be a significant relationship between the scholastic competence score and level of achievement.



## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### A. Subjects

Fifty-five 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at an elementary school in a First Nations community in southern Ontario, were presented with the opportunity to participate in this study. A description of the study was presented to all 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The students were encouraged to ask questions about the study and were frequently reminded that participation in the study was completely voluntary. In order to qualify for this study, the student had the permission of the Board of Education, school principal, parental consent and individual assent. Forty three students returned consent forms to participate in the study. The students, 22 male and 21 female, are of Potawatomi, Ottawa and Ojibwe descent. Of the forty three students, 28 were in grade five and 15 were in grade six. Discrepancy of the sample size appeared as scores were unavailable in some areas of the Academic Achievement Report and the Self-Perception scale. The sample was available for this study at a nearby school where the principal is actively involved in current research with a high interest in Native achievement.

#### B. Instrumentation

Two measurement instruments were used in this study. The Self-Perception Profile for Children-SPPC (see Appendix A) was used to assess Self-Perception. This instrument was created by Harter (1985) for third through sixth grades and may be administered in groups or individually. Permission is granted by the author to copy and utilize the SPPC instrument in SPPC Manual. The instrument relates the children's perceptions of themselves and examines the differences in their scores to provide the most accurate

portrayal of the individual's self-concept. Byrne (1996) indicated that the SPPC is one of the most frequently used instruments to assess preadolescent self-concept. The SPPC contains six separate subscales that accessed five specific domains, as well as a separate dimension of global self-worth. The specific domains include scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct and global self-worth.

Scholastic competence identifies the child's perception of their competence or ability within the realm of scholastic performance. Social acceptance determines the degree to which the child is accepted by peers or feels popular. Athletic competence is relevant to sports and outdoor games. Physical appearance identifies the degree to which the child is happy with the way he or she looks, likes one's height, weight, body, face, hair and feels that he or she is good-looking. Behavioral conduct refers to the degree to which children like the way they behave, do the right thing, act the way they are supposed to, avoid getting into trouble, and do the things they are supposed to do. Global self-worth determines the extent to which the child likes oneself as a person, is happy the way one is leading one's life, and is generally happy with the way one is.

Each of the six subscales contains six items, totaling 36 items. The two-choice question format provides respondents with enough range to qualify their responses. The child is first asked to decide which kind of child is most like them and then asked whether this is only sort of true or really true. The effectiveness of this question format implies that half of the children in the world view themselves in one way, whereas the other half view themselves in the opposite manner. This type of question legitimizes either choice. The items are presented in a four point structured –alternative format, that

aims to offset the tendency for children to answer in a socially desired manner (Bryne, 1996). Children respond to each item by deciding which of the two statements best describes them and then they choose whether it is really true for them or just sort of true for them. When they have decided which of the four choices is most like them, they indicate their choice by coloring, checking or placing an “x” in the accompanying box beside the item. Item responses to the SPPC are scored as 1, 2, 3 or 4. The number 4 indicates a high level of self-concept. When scoring the SPPC, item scores are averaged within each subscale, which provides a total profile of six scores. Each represents a mean ranging from 1 to 4.

Normative data development for the SPPC was based on four independent samples of elementary school children, ranging from grade 3 through grade 8, in Colorado.

Approximately 90% of the children were White and were from families representative of the lower-middle through upper middle socioeconomic classes. The reported information on the original instrument, Harter’s Perceived Competence Scale for Children includes Administration and Scoring-3, Reliability-3 and Validity-3 (Harter, 1982). Internal consistency reliabilities for all six subscales of the SPPC are as follows: Scholastic Competence is .80 to .85, Social Acceptance is .75 to .80, Athletic Competence is .80 to .86, Physical Appearance is .76 to .82, Behavioral Conduct is .71 to .77 and Global Self-Worth is .78 to .84. Reliabilities are based on Cronbach’s Alpha. Table 1 represents the means and standard deviations for each fifth grade sample in Harter’s (1985) research. Table 2 represents the means and standard deviations for each sample in the sixth grade from the Harter (1985) research.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for the Fifth Grade from the Harter (1985) Self  
Perception Profile for Children

Scale	Sample	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Scholastic Competence	C	2.78	.69	2.83	.58
	D	2.91	.63	2.75	.65
Social Acceptance	C	2.88	.71	2.80	.77
	D	3.00	.47	2.86	.66
Athletic Competence	C	3.15	.72	2.62	.85
	D	3.05	.69	2.52	.72
Physical Appearance	C	3.15	.72	2.62	.83
	D	2.99	.58	2.70	.77
Behavioral Conduct	C	2.84	.56	3.32	.53
	D	2.82	.48	3.02	.34
Global Self-Worth	C	3.14	.69	3.04	.72
	D	3.24	.44	2.66	.71

Note. From Manual for the Self-Perception Profile for Children (p.15 & 16), by S. Harter, 1985, Denver, CO: University of Denver.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for the Sixth Grade from the Harter (1985) Self-Perception Profile for Children

Scale	Sample	<u>Male</u>	Standard Deviation	<u>Female</u>	Standard Deviation
		Mean		Mean	
Scholastic Competence	A	2.94	.62	2.94	.64
	B	3.10	.65	2.88	.75
	C	2.99	.60	2.80	.64
Social Acceptance	A	3.06	.63	2.98	.69
	B	2.95	.76	2.87	.79
	C	2.98	.50	2.86	.71
Athletic Competence	A	3.15	.61	2.80	.69
	B	3.14	.74	2.58	.81
	C	2.95	.61	2.40	.74
Physical Appearance	A	2.98	.68	2.68	.75
	B	3.10	.72	2.58	.79
	C	2.95	.56	2.40	.65
Behavioral Conduct	A	2.92	.60	3.06	.56
	B	2.98	.63	3.07	.65
	C	2.65	.43	3.34	.57
Global Self-Worth	A	3.20	.61	3.10	.65
	B	3.20	.67	3.01	.68
	C	2.97	.60	3.08	.58

Note. From Manual for the Self-Perception Profile for Children (p.15&16), by S. Harter, 1985, Denver, CO: University of Denver.

To measure the academic achievement of each grade five and six student in the sample, the researcher examined the student's Achievement Report (Appendix B) from the previous year. The Achievement Report is a report card prepared by the student's teacher based on performance throughout the academic year. Scores in the 80 to 100 percentile are assigned an A- to an A +; in the 70 to 79 percentile are assigned a B- to a

B+; scores in the 60 to 69 percentile are assigned a C- to a C+ ; and scores in the 50 to 59 percentile are assigned a D- to a D+. Sixteen achievement scores were examined in the following academic subjects on the Achievement Report: language arts (listening, oral language, reading, grammar, written language, spelling, penmanship), mathematics, environmental studies (science, social studies, health), computers, physical education, art, drama and study skills.

A number from one to twelve was assigned to letter grades beginning with D- increasing in value to A+ for this study. The mean for each subject was calculated from the individual's total score in each subject.

### C. Design and Procedures

This study was of a correlational design. The Self-Perception scores, assessed by the SPPC instrument (see Appendix A) were correlated with the Achievement scores, assessed by the Achievement Report( see Appendix B). The Self-Perception score encompassed Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Athletic Competence, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct and Global Self-Worth. The Achievement score included grades in the following subjects: Language Arts (Listening, Oral Language, Reading, Grammar, Written Language, Spelling, Penmanship), Mathematics, Environmental Studies (Science, Social Studies, Health), Computers, Physical Education, Art and Study Skills.

Permission was sought and granted from the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board as well as the participating Board of Education by a Letter of Permission (see Appendix C). Permission was also sought and granted from the principal of the participating elementary school by means of a Letter of Information and Consent (see

Appendix D). The subjects were presented with the opportunity to participate in the study and were given a package that contained a detailed Letter of Consent (see Appendix E) and Letter of Information (see Appendix F) that provided a thorough explanation of the study. To be eligible to participate, subjects had to return signed consent forms from their parents. The students were given one week to return the consent forms. A coded subject list was created from the returned consent forms.

On the survey administration day, students who had parental consent, were provided with a Letter of Assent (see Appendix G) before they began the survey. When the Letters of Assent were signed and collected, the Self-Perception Profile For Children (SPPC) was distributed. A sample SPPC question was read aloud by the researcher and completed with the students, to enable understanding. Students were allowed thirty minutes to complete the survey. More time was allowed if needed. The researcher ensured confidentiality by coding and securing the self-perception and achievement data in a sealed envelope and in a locked filing cabinet.

#### D. Data Analysis

The surveys and achievement scores were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) database. From the two measurement instruments, twenty two mean scores were generated. The first set of scores were computed from the sixteen subject areas on the Achievement Report. Grades in the following areas were included: listening, oral language, reading, grammar, written language, spelling, penmanship, mathematics, science, social studies, health, computers, physical education, art, drama and study skills.

The second set of scores were generated from the thirty six items of the SPPC that were divided into six domains: Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Athletic

Competence, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct and Global Self-Worth. The mean for each subscale was calculated using the SPPC scores. Means and standard deviations were calculated and detailed for each of the subjects and domains as well as the total scores for each instrument. The data were analyzed using t-tests, regression analyses with one way analyses of variance (ANOVA) and correlational analysis.

To determine the relationship between the self-perception scores of scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance behavioral conduct and global self-worth with the average Academic Achievement score, Pearson's correlation test was utilized.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Data were scored and recorded for self-perception and academic achievement. Correlational analysis indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship between Self-Perception and Academic Achievement as hypothesized. The Average Self-Perception score and all subscales of the Self-Perception Scale for Children were not significantly related to Academic Achievement (see Table 3). Of the six subscales, Athletic Competence had the strongest relationship with Average Self-Perception. Global Self-Worth correlated with all variables except Average Achievement and Scholastic Competence. Strong correlations were evident between Global Self-Worth and Average Self-Perception ( $r=.727$ ,  $p< .001$ ). Scholastic Competence correlated with Average Achievement ( $r=.341$ ,  $p< .05$ ) and Average Self-Perception ( $r= .580$ ,  $p< .001$ ). Social Acceptance demonstrated a correlation with Average Self-Perception ( $r=.702$ ,  $p< .001$ ) and Scholastic Competence ( $R=.471$ ,  $p< .001$ ). Physical Appearance was significantly correlated with Average Self-Perception ( $r = .659$ ,  $p< .001$ ). This relationship indicates that as perception of Physical Appearance increased, the child's feeling of Self-Perception increased. A strong and positive relationship was evident when Athletic Competence and Physical Appearance was correlated ( $r = .445$ ,  $p< .01$ ). As the child's level of Athletic Competence perception increased, their perception of Physical Appearance also increased. The only variable that correlated with Average Achievement was Scholastic Competence ( $r= .341$ ,  $p< .05$ ). The results did not support the hypothesis of a significant relationship between Self-Perception of fifth and sixth grade Native students and Academic Achievement.

Table 3

Correlations Between Academic Achievement Score and Self-Perception Variables

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1. Average Achievement</b>	1.00							
<b>2. Average Self-perception</b>	.179	1.00						
<b>3. Scholastic Competence</b>	.341*	.580**	1.00					
<b>4. Social Acceptance</b>	.008	.702**	.471**	1.00				
<b>5. Athletic Competence</b>	.103	.737**	.394**	.449**	1.00			
<b>6. Physical Appearance</b>	-.017	.659**	.002	.319*	.445**	1.00		
<b>7. Behavioral Conduct</b>	.149	.598**	.269	.149	.244	.323*	1.00	
<b>8. Global Self-Worth</b>	.126	.727**	.169	.398**	.426**	.537**	.418**	1.00

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Twenty-two males and 21 females ranging in age from 10 to 12 years participated. The means and standard deviations for all scores are presented (see Tables 4A, 4B and 5). The results in Table 4A indicate that girls scored higher than boys on every Academic Achievement variable as demonstrated by the Listening mean score. The girls score was 8.8962 and the boys score was 7.6485. This observation was evident in every subject.

Table 4A

Means and Standard Deviations from the Academic Achievement Report (Listening-Math)

Gender		Listening	Oral Language	Reading	Grammar	Written Language	Spelling	Penmanship	Math
Female	Mean	8.8962	8.6814	7.7843	7.6333	8.0771	8.4667	8.4576	7.7129
	N	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
	Std. Deviation	2.64135	2.58212	2.90333	2.52425	2.99238	3.23805	2.10312	3.01349
Male	Mean	7.6485	7.9343	7.0686	7.0235	6.9667	8.0810	7.9438	6.8064
	N	20	21	21	20	21	20	21	22
	Std. Deviation	2.79362	2.67622	2.29391	2.46312	2.80231	3.39182	2.55516	3.41124
Total	Mean	8.2876	8.3079	7.4264	7.3359	7.5219	8.2785	8.2007	7.2491
	N	41	42	42	41	42	41	42	43
	Std. Deviation	2.75574	2.62470	2.60958	2.48253	2.91796	3.27798	2.32595	3.21758

In Table 4B, girls had a mean score of 8.3005 in Science and boys had a mean score of 7.3241. Another example includes the Social Studies mean score. The girls score was 8.9190 and the boys score was 7.8314. The girls scores were greater than the boys scores in all subject areas.

Table 4B

Means and Standard Deviations from the Academic Achievement Report (Science-Study Skills)

Gender		Science	Social Studies	Health	Computers	Physical Education	Art	Drama	Study Skills
Female	Mean	8.3005	8.9190	9.0457	9.7143	9.8243	10.0067	9.5367	7.9986
	N	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
	Std. Deviation	1.59499	1.75709	1.45729	2.98568	1.42573	1.56326	1.31502	3.27865
Male	Mean	7.3241	7.8314	8.1427	9.3182	8.4914	8.6036	8.2245	7.2357
	N	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	21
	Std. Deviation	2.50951	2.04989	1.96700	3.40009	1.51246	2.05070	1.50326	3.69796
Total	Mean	7.8009	8.3626	8.5837	9.5116	9.1423	9.2888	8.8653	7.6171
	N	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	42
	Std. Deviation	2.14572	1.96821	1.77607	3.17259	1.60194	1.94164	1.54719	3.47324

On the Self-Perception Profile for Children instrument, the average scores for the girls and boys were very similar (see Table 5).

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations from the Self-Perception Profile for Children

Gender		Scholastic Competence	Social Acceptance	Athletic Competence	Physical Appearance	Behavioral Conduct	Global Self-Worth
Female	Mean	2.9457	2.6752	2.8757	2.9010	2.9314	3.1557
	N	21	21	21	21	21	21
	Std. Deviation	.59028	.70580	.60302	.80784	.52305	.55643
Male	Mean	2.6800	2.7091	2.9891	3.0414	2.7700	3.2395
	N	22	22	22	22	22	22
	Std. Deviation	.74595	.67877	.69156	.58075	.77137	.67703
Total	Mean	2.8098	2.6926	2.9337	2.9728	2.8488	3.1986
	N	43	43	43	43	43	43
	Std. Deviation	.67985	.68401	.64465	.69602	.65913	.61516

Similarities were evident in the Scholastic Competence score as the girls had a mean score of 2.9457 and the boys had a mean score of 2.6800. The means and standard deviations for Self-Perception demonstrated similarity to the normative data presented in the manual for the Self-Perception Profile for Children. One similarity was evident in the Scholastic Competence mean (2.9457) for the girls in this study compared to the normative data presented for this domain which was 2.83 and 2.75.

The normative data for the sixth grade indicated a mean score of 2.94, 2.88 and 2.80 in the Scholastic Competence domain. Another similarity was presented in the Social Acceptance mean (2.7091) for the boys in this study compared to the normative data presented in this domain. The fifth grade mean score was 2.88 and 3.00. The normative data for the sixth grade indicated a mean score of 2.98, 2.87 and 2.86 in the Social Acceptance domain. Other similarities include the mean scores in the Athletic Competence domain for the girls (2.8757) in this study. Compared to the normative data presented, the fifth grade mean score was 2.62 and 2.52. The sixth grade mean score for girls was 2.80, 2.58 and 2.40. The boys in this study had a mean score of 2.9891 in the area of Athletic Competence. Normative data presented in this domain for the fifth grade boys was 3.15 and 3.05. The sixth grade mean score for boys was 3.15, 3.14 and 2.95. The Physical Appearance mean scores for the girls (2.9010) in this study were similar to the normative data presented. Fifth grade scores for the girls were 2.62 and 2.70, sixth grade scores were 2.68, 2.58 and 2.40. The boys in this study had a mean score of 3.0414 in the Physical Appearance domain. Normative data for fifth grade boys was 3.15 and 2.99 in this domain. Sixth grade scores for boys were 2.98, 3.10 and 2.95 in the area of Physical Appearance. In this study, the girls had a mean score of 3.1557 in the Global Self-Worth domain. Normative data indicated a mean score of 3.04 and 2.66 for the fifth grade girls and 3.10, 3.01 and 3.08 for the sixth grade girls. Boys in this study presented a mean score of 3.2395 in the area of Global Self-Worth. Fifth grade normative data in this area were 3.14 and 3.24 for the boys and 3.20, 3.20 and 2.97 for the sixth grade boys. Data from this study in the area of Behavioral Conduct for girls and boys were 2.9314 and 2.7700. This was also very similar to the normative data presented for this domain.

Differences in Average Achievement, based on Gender was examined by a t-test (see Table 6). Levene's Test for Equality of Variances indicated  $F=.109$  and  $p=.743$ . The difference was not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. An Independent Samples Test with the assumption of equal variances was used,  $t = 1.504$ ,  $p=.141$  indicating no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls.

Table 6

Differences in Average Achievement Based on Gender: Using t-test

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Average Achievement	Female	21	8.6910	1.72756	.37698
	Male	20	7.8551	1.83148	.40953

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Average Achievement	Equal variances assumed	.109	.743	1.504	39	.141	.8359	.55581	-.28838	1.96010

Differences in Average Achievement based on Grade Level was also examined by a t-test (see Table 7). Levene's Test indicated that  $F=.194$  and  $p=.662$ . The difference was not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. The Independent Samples Test with the assumption of equal variances was used,  $t = 1.502$ ,  $p = .141$  indicating no significant difference in Achievement between the grade five students and the grade six students.

Table 7

Differences in Average Achievement Based on Grade Level: Using t-test

	Grade	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Average Achievement	5.00	27	8.5837	1.69587	.32637
	6.00	14	7.7038	1.93479	.51709

## Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
Average Achieve- ment	Equal variances assumed	.194	.662	1.502	39	.141	.8799	.58592	-.30521	2.06507	



A linear regression test was performed to investigate the relationship between Scholastic Competence and Academic Achievement (see Table 8). It was indicated that  $R^2=.116$  and  $p=.029$ . Scholastic Competence predicted a proportion (11.6%) of the variance in Academic Achievement of grade five and six Native students,  $F_{39} = 5.14$ ,  $p=.029$ . There was a linear relationship between Scholastic Competence and the Average Achievement of Native students in grade five and six.

Table 8

Regression Analysis of Relationship Between Scholastic Competence and Average Achievement

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.341	.116	.094	1.71996

a Predictors: (Constant), Scholastic Competence

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.206	1	15.206	5.140	.029
	Residual	115.372	39	2.958		
	Total	130.578	40			

a Predictors: (Constant), Scholastic Competence

b Dependent Variable: Average Achievement

Coefficients						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.702	1.170		4.874	.000
	Scholastic Competence	.934	.412	.341	2.267	.029

a Dependent Variable: Average Achievement

To investigate specific relationships more closely, the Pearson product-moment correlations were examined (see Table 9A and 9B). A number of significant correlations were observed. The strongest correlation found between Reading and Grammar ( $r=.894$ ,  $p<.001$ ) was an indication that Reading scores increased as the mean grade in Grammar increased. Observations included a strong correlation between Grammar and Average Achievement ( $r=.893$ ,  $p<.001$ ), Social Studies and Average Achievement ( $r=.892$ ,  $p<.001$ ), Math and Average Achievement ( $r=.869$ ,  $p<.001$ ), Reading and Average Achievement ( $r=.856$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and Written Language and Average Achievement ( $r=.815$ ,  $p<.001$ ). As grades in Grammar, Social Studies, Math, Reading and Written Language increased, overall Academic Achievement increased. The correlation between Math Achievement and Science Achievement ( $r = .711$ ,  $p<.001$ ) was significant, indicating that Math achievement increased as Science Achievement increased. All Achievement variables except Computers ( $r=.207$ ,  $p>.05$ ) demonstrated a strong correlation with Average Achievement. All were significant ( $p<.001$ ). The Computer variable was not significantly correlated with any Achievement variables except Written Language ( $r=.322$ ,  $p<.05$ ) indicating that Achievement in Computers increased as Achievement in Written Language increased. Correlations were not established between Drama scores and Reading ( $r=.301$ ,  $p>.05$ ), Written Language ( $r=.277$ ,  $p>.05$ ) and Spelling ( $r=.155$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Correlations were not observed between Physical Education and Grammar ( $r=.270$ ,  $p>.05$ ), Written Language ( $r=.229$ ,  $p>.05$ ), Spelling ( $r=.090$ ,  $p>.05$ ), Penmanship ( $r=.294$ ,  $p>.05$ ), Math ( $r=.247$ ,  $p>.05$ ) and Computers ( $r=.036$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Study Skills were correlated with all Achievement variables except Computers ( $r=-.112$ ,  $p>.05$ ),

Art ( $r=.174$ ,  $p>.05$ ) and Drama ( $r=.226$ ,  $p>.05$ ). The results indicate that these Achievement variables are not interrelated in this study.

Table 9A

Correlations Between Overall Mean of Average Achievement and Achievement

Variables (Listening-Math)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Average Achievement	1.00								
2. Listening	.783**	1.00							
3. Oral Language	.774**	.714**	1.00						
4. Reading	.856**	.580**	.685**	1.00					
5. Grammar	.893**	.560**	.695**	.894**	1.00				
6. Written Language	.815**	.542**	.642**	.689**	.783**	1.00			
7. Spelling	.769**	.429**	.430**	.692**	.739**	.758**	1.00		
8. Penman- ship	.781**	.560**	.580**	.682**	.652**	.604**	.525**	1.00	
9. Math	.869**	.608**	.669**	.840**	.876**	.683**	.729**	.595**	1.00
10. Science	.798**	.636**	.626**	.679**	.694**	.530**	.443**	.643**	.711**
11. Social Studies	.892**	.725**	.820**	.755**	.815**	.656**	.578**	.636**	.811**
12. Health	.769**	.643**	.588**	.575**	.570**	.523**	.532**	.735**	.565**
13. Computers	.207	.166	-.043	.074	.117	.322*	.290	.112	.045
14. Physical Education	.458**	.479**	.398**	.313*	.270	.229	.090	.294	.247
15. Art	.711**	.708**	.659**	.505**	.541**	.505**	.347*	.601**	.607**
16. Drama	.492**	.547**	.394**	.301	.353	.277	.155	.315*	.364*
17. Study Skills	.665**	.404**	.377*	.562**	.586**	.499**	.624**	.502**	.526**

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 9B

Correlations Between Overall Mean of Average Achievement and AchievementVariables (Science-Study Skills)

Variable	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Average Achieve- ment								
2. Listening								
3. Oral Language								
4. Reading								
5. Grammar								
6. Written Language								
7. Spelling								
8. Penman- ship								
9. Math								
10. Science	1.00							
11. Social Studies	.869**	1.00						
12. Health	.698**	.741**	1.00					
13. Computers	-.017	.004	.191	1.00				
14. Physical Education	.405**	.436**	.470**	.036	1.00			
15. Art	.574**	.730**	.614**	.112	.432**	1.00		
16. Drama	.392**	.462**	.452**	.100	.609**	.645**	1.00	
17. Study Skills	.574**	.517**	.415**	-.112	.414**	.174	.226	1.00

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

This study investigated the relationship between self-perception and academic achievement among Native children in grades five and six. Results did not support the hypothesis that self-perception was significantly related to academic achievement and there was no degree of relationship to examine in reference to gender. Grade level did not influence the hypothesized relationship in this study. Results supported Scholastic Competence as a predictor of Academic Achievement.

The present study did not support previous research (Campbell, 1965; Caplin, 1966; Purkey, 1970; Pepper & Henry, 1991; Newman, 1991/1992; Covington, 1992; Bissonnette, 2000) that identified a significant relationship between self-perception and academic achievement. Although elementary students were often the subjects in these studies, Native students and/or empirical evidence were not included. Inclusion of these factors may have modified the results. The present study was focused on providing a correlational design that facilitated a Native student sample.

It is of interest to note that some previous studies (Maruyama, Rubin & Kingsbury, 1981; Gordon, 1995; Colvin, 2000) did not establish a significant relationship between self-perception and academic achievement in both Native and non-Native populations. Fuchs and Havighurst (1972) observed only a slight relationship among Native students in their study of self-esteem and achievement. It was observed that Native students viewed school achievement as a separate aspect of their being and did not greatly influence their feeling of self-worth. Findings of the present study were consistent as the self-perception of Native children was not drastically affected by their level of

achievement. The identification of influential factors on self-perception of Native children warrants future research.

Previous research has established that Native children required an environment that facilitated positive self-concept and a strong belief in their own worth as people and as learners (Campbell, 1983). It seems necessary to consider and to incorporate the Native student's cultural background into the present teaching methodologies. Van Hamme (1995) determined that this was necessary to develop the sense of pride that was critical to cultural identity and academic success.

It is also necessary to investigate the question of the environment being more supportive to girls than boys. The comparison of achievement means between girls and boys indicates higher levels of achievement for the girls. When differences for gender and grade were analyzed, it did not approach significance. Further study in this area with Native children would be of interest.

The instruments utilized to assess self-perception and achievement in this study seemed adequate for the identified purposes. The Self-Perception Profile for Children tapped six specific domains. An additional factor may have accessed a Native child's cultural perception and influenced alternate results. The questions were stated in clearly understood language to facilitate comprehension. Only two students required clarification on some of the questions. Administration and scoring were completed with ease. The achievement report generated grades for several areas. The equal weight attributed to each "subject" was questionable. For example, Penmanship received the same amount of influence on achievement as Mathematics. A more objective measure of achievement may have modified the findings. The elimination of some of the achievement variables

may have been possible which would have distorted the overall picture of achievement utilized by the participating school. Most measures of achievement seem to have a subjective element to them. Gordon (1995) suggested that the academic achievement model must be determined by the chosen sample and cannot be assumed to be of value to them because the model is valued by the researcher.

Although there was not compelling evidence that a significant relationship exists between academic achievement and self-perception among Native students, there were several beneficial outcomes of this study. The identification that self-perception of Native children is not significantly related to academic achievement suggests positive implications. To enhance the Native child's self-concept, a supportive environment that promotes the child's background and unique sense of identity is required. School is much more than simply a place to learn. The present study presents the question: if self-perception is not related to academic achievement among Native students, what factors do influence achievement?

An area that may influence academic achievement is a student's home environment. Cox (1990) theorized that a child's early home background and the quality of educational experience was an important influence of academic development. Socio-economic indicators in Indian communities were investigated by the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1997). The study demonstrated that academic achievement in the reserve communities and comparable communities were much lower than the national population. Housing, education, labor force, income and general demographics are areas that may be further investigated for their relationship to academic achievement.

Coopersmith (1967) stated that it was possible for an individual to attain high self-esteem by attainment in any of these areas: power, significance, virtue and competence. The present study established that similar variables were significantly correlated with the Average Self-Perception score. Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Athletic Competence, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct and Global Self-Worth are variables highly related to power, significance, virtue and competence.

Lefley (1974) hypothesized that mothers and children in the less acculturated, more socially intact Miccosukee tribe had significantly higher self-esteem than the more acculturated Seminole tribe. The observations of the present study was unable to establish a similar hypothesis as the students in the sample were not required to identify their affiliation to a Native group. Acculturation was not a variable considered in this study.

It was theorized by Saracho (1980) that a child sensed competence in activities that were valued by the people important to them. A similar postulation was not possible in this study as the importance of academic achievement to the students was not measured. Data indicated that achievement was not a variable correlated with any other non-academic variable.

The present study established that Scholastic Competence was the only Self-Perception variable that was significantly correlated with Average Achievement. This finding was inconsistent with the Maruyama, Rubin, and Kingsbury (1981) postulation that academic self-esteem was not related to achievement. Pottebaum, Keith and Ehly (1986) hypothesized a non-causal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement. It was suggested that social class and ability could possibly be prevalent



over both achievement and self-concept. Social class and ability could form the basis for a very relevant study in the area of Native education.

#### A. Limitations of the Study

The initial limitation in the present study was sample size. Failure to establish predicted significant relationships may have been the result of a lack of power. Although there was a good return of consent forms, forty-three out of fifty-four students, extensions of this population would have increased the sample size. Two students who did not bring back consent forms voluntarily explained that their parents did not want them to be involved in the study. Other students stated that they forgot to take the forms home or forgot to bring the forms back to school. It was later suggested to the researcher that a community meeting to inform the parents of the present study may have generated more awareness. To increase the sample size, another grade or school could have been included. The present sample consisted of fifth and sixth grade Native students. Generalization of the results from this study to other populations is limited.

There are limitations to the design of this study. The results of this research study are reported as correlation statements, which may demonstrate some form of relationship between the variables. The limitation is that these statements will not determine cause and effect. The findings may demonstrate levels of self-perception to academic achievement but the data will not provide evidence as to why the relationship exists and will not detail any circumstance under which the findings would be different.

Threats to the validity of the study are the convenience sampling method and specificity of the sample. If all of the elementary schools in Native communities in

southern Ontario were asked to participate then the data analysis would be optimal. The sample only gave results based on Native students at the participating school.

#### B. Recommendations for Further Research

The implications of this study warrant further research. Relationships that were not found in this study may be evident in a larger sample size. Future studies could establish a relationship between self-perception and academic achievement among Native students. The involvement of other First Nation schools is recommended to increase the validity of future research studies.

An alternate means to assess Achievement is recommended based on this study. It would be of interest to investigate the validity of the present achievement instrument. A standardized test may not be the most suitable or culturally appropriate but rather an instrument that assesses achievement more objectively. A means of assessment that involves the student would be relevant.

Future educational research with Native children is necessary to determine what factors influence academic achievement for this population. The relationship between academic achievement and student attendance could be of interest and warrants further study. Much more research needs to be conducted to ascertain what Native students require to invest in their academic lives.

The results of this study involved the school environment but not the home environment. Although Scholastic Competence was tapped by the Self-Perception Profile for Children, no relationship was found with Achievement. The home environment was not considered by the instrument but is a very influential factor in a child's life. Future research that includes the Native child's perception of family, home and community

would be very beneficial. These factors are paramount to the identity of Native children and necessitate consideration in further research.

It is recommended that future researchers acknowledge the important role held by the community for First Nations people. This could be accomplished by the presentation of a proposed study at a community meeting or school function. Without the support of the community, participation may not be optimal. Research in Native communities has a negative history and must be done with respect and consideration.

To summarize, no relationship was determined between self-perception and academic achievement among Native children in grade five and grade six. Native children in this sample were unique in that academic achievement did not affect their self-perception. As a result of this study, it seems relevant to provide an academic environment that maintains their sense of self-worth while fostering relevant educational opportunities. This study has demonstrated that more research is necessary to identify factors that promote academic achievement with Native children.

## CHAPTER VI

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## APPENDIX A

### SELF-PERCEPTION PROFILE FOR CHILDREN (SPPC)

#### What I Am Like

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_  
 Boy or Girl (circle which)

#### SAMPLE SENTENCE

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me		Sort of True for me	Really True for me
(a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids would rather play outdoors in their spare time <b>BUT</b> Other kids would rather watch T.V.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/>					
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids feel that they are very <i>good</i> at their school work <b>BUT</b> Other kids <i>worry</i> about whether they can do the school work assigned to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids find it <i>hard</i> to make friends <b>BUT</b> Other kids find it's pretty easy to make friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids do very <i>well</i> at all kinds of sports <b>BUT</b> Other kids <i>don't</i> feel that they are very good when it comes to sports.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are <i>happy</i> with the way they look <b>BUT</b> Other kids are <i>not</i> happy with the way they look.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids often do <i>not</i> like the way they <i>behave</i> <b>BUT</b> Other kids usually <i>like</i> the way they behave.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are often <i>unhappy</i> with themselves <b>BUT</b> Other kids are pretty <i>pleased</i> with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids feel like they are <i>just as smart</i> as as other kids their age <b>BUT</b> Other kids aren't so sure and <i>wonder</i> if they are as smart.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids have <i>alot</i> of friends <b>BUT</b> Other kids <i>don't</i> have very many friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids wish they could be alot better at sports	BUT	Other kids feel they are good enough at sports.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are <i>happy</i> with their height and weight	BUT	Other kids wish their height or weight were <i>different</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids usually do the <i>right</i> thing	BUT	Other kids often <i>don't</i> do the right thing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids <i>don't</i> like the way they are leading their life	BUT	Other kids <i>do</i> like the way they are leading their life.	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are pretty <i>slow</i> in finishing their school work	BUT	Other kids can do their school work <i>quickly</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids would like to have alot more friends	BUT	Other kids have as many friends as they want.	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids think they could do well at just about any new sports activity they haven't tried before	BUT	Other kids are afraid they might <i>not</i> do well at sports they haven't ever tried.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids wish their body was <i>different</i>	BUT	Other kids <i>like</i> their body the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids usually <i>act</i> the way they know they are <i>supposed</i> to	BUT	Other kids often <i>don't</i> act the way they are supposed to.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are <i>happy</i> with themselves as a person	BUT	Other kids are often <i>not</i> happy with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids often <i>forget</i> what they learn	BUT	Other kids can remember things <i>easily</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are always doing things with <i>alot</i> of kids	BUT	Other kids usually do things <i>by themselves</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
21.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids feel that they are <i>better</i> than others their age at sports	BUT	Other kids <i>don't</i> feel they can play as well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids wish their physical appearance (how they look) was <i>different</i>	BUT	Other kids <i>like</i> their physical appearance the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids usually get in <i>trouble</i> because of things they do	BUT	Other kids usually <i>don't</i> do things that get them in trouble.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids <i>like</i> the kind of <i>person</i> they are	BUT	Other kids often wish they were someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids do <i>very well</i> at their classwork	BUT	Other kids <i>don't</i> do very well at their classwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids wish that more people their age liked them	BUT	Other kids feel that most people their age <i>do</i> like them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In games and sports some kids usually <i>watch</i> instead of play	BUT	Other kids usually <i>play</i> rather than just watch.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids wish something about their face or hair looked <i>different</i>	BUT	Other kids <i>like</i> their face and hair the way they are.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids do things they know they <i>shouldn't</i> do	BUT	Other kids <i>hardly ever</i> do things they know they shouldn't do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are very <i>happy</i> being the way they are	BUT	Other kids wish they were <i>different</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids have <i>trouble</i> figuring out the answers in school	BUT	Other kids almost <i>always</i> can figure out the answers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are <i>popular</i> with others their age	BUT	Other kids are <i>not</i> very popular.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
33.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids <i>don't</i> do well at new outdoor games	BUT	Other kids are <i>good</i> at new games right away.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids think that they are good looking	BUT	Other kids think that they are not very good looking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids behave themselves very well	BUT	Other kids often find it hard to behave themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some kids are not very happy with the way they do alot of things	BUT	Other kids think the way they do things is <i>fine</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Susan Harter, Ph.D., University of Denver, 1985

## APPENDIX B

### ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

<b>TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS:</b>					
This copy of the achievement form should be retained for future reference. The Original has been placed in the record folder in respect of the pupil and will be retained for only three years after the pupil retires from school. Every effort has been made to ensure that all entries made are a clear indication of the achievement of the pupil. If you wish to review the information contained in the record folder, please contact the Elementary School					
Student: _____ Grade: _____ School Year: _____ Teacher: _____					
<b>ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>	
LANGUAGE ARTS:  LISTENING ORAL LANGUAGE READING (vocabulary, silent/oral reading, comprehension) GRAMMAR WRITTEN LANGUAGE SPELLING PENMANSHIP				<u>Term 1</u>	
MATHEMATICS: (computation, problem solving)				<u>Term 2</u>	
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES: SCIENCE SOCIAL ST. HEALTH				<u>Term 3</u>	
COMPUTERS					
PHYSICAL EDUCATION					
ART					
DRAMA					
STUDY SKILLS					
Placement in September:_____ Grade:_____  Teacher: _____  Elementary Team: _____				<u>Attendance</u> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>Number of Days Absent</span> <span>Number of Times Late</span> </div>	
				1	2
				3	Total

## APPENDIX C

**Letter of Permission to Board of Education**

February 17, 2004.

Chairperson  
Board of Education  
XXXXXX First Nation, ON  
X8X 4X9

Dear XX.XXXXX:

As a graduate student at the University of Windsor working towards a Master of Education degree, it is necessary to fulfill the research component of my program. My proposed research study will examine the relationship between self-perception and academic achievement of Native students in the fifth and sixth grade.

Approval to proceed has been granted by the Graduate Committee and the Research Ethics Board at the University of Windsor. Your written permission to implement the intended research would be greatly appreciated. The information for this research study will be obtained using a self-perception survey to be completed by the fifth and sixth grade students in a group. The students' report cards, from the previous year, would be examined to determine achievement scores. The confidentiality of the students is assured. A copy of the research proposal is enclosed for your review.

Participation in this study will be completely voluntary. Those individuals who decide to participate will have the option of withdrawing at any time before or during the study without reprimand. There are no known risks associated with the research. The results of this study will be available on request.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the proposed research, please contact either my advisor, Dr. Linda McKay at (519) 253-3000 ext. 3819 or myself at (519) 627-4846. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Connie McGregor  
Encl.

## APPENDIX D

**LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT TO PRINCIPAL****THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-PERCEPTION AND  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG NATIVE STUDENTS  
IN GRADE FIVE AND GRADE SIX**

Dear Principal,

You are asked to allow students in your fifth and sixth grade classes to participate in a research study conducted by Connie McGregor, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will be used for the sole purpose of meeting the requirements for a Master of Education degree.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Dr. Linda McKay, Faculty of Education Supervisor at (519) 253-3000 ext. 3819.

☛ **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to investigate self-perception and the relationship to academic achievement among Native students in grade five and six.

☛ **PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer the fifth and sixth grade students to participate in this study, they will be asked to complete a survey which will be administered in a group format in a large quiet room (i.e. the cafeteria). The completion of the survey will require thirty minutes and will be completed during class time under the supervision of the researcher. Once completed, the researcher will collect the surveys and place them in a sealed envelope. The participating students will proceed to their regularly scheduled class once they have completed the survey to their satisfaction.

The researcher will examine the student's achievement reports from the previous year to determine achievement scores. Students will not be contacted for follow-up sessions or subsequent related studies.

☛ **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There are no physical, psychological, financial or social risks associated with completing the survey and granting the researcher permission to examine the students' achievement reports.

### ☛ **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR SOCIETY**

Studying self-perception and academic achievement is important because it will provide results which can be utilized to develop more effective education programs for Native students. With this information, current education programs could be modified to better prepare Native students for academic achievement.

### ☛ **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participation in this study is voluntary. There will be no monetary payments for participation in this study.

### ☛ **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Students' names and the school name will not be indicated in the results. All written information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and all information will only be accessible to my advisor and myself. After the completion of the study, all information will be shredded.

### ☛ **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether your students will be in this study or not. If you volunteer your students to be in this study, you may withdraw them at any time without consequence of any kind. You may ask your students to refuse to answer any questions you don't want them to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw your students from the research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

### ☛ **FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS**

Information regarding the results of the study will be made available to the participants by contacting the researcher. A copy of the completed study will be presented to the elementary school and to the community library.

### ☛ **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions regarding your students' rights as a research subjects, contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator  
University of Windsor  
Windsor, Ontario  
N9B 3P4

Telephone: (519) 253-3000, ext. 3916  
E-mail: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca)

🔱 **SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE**

I understand the information provided for the study “The Relationship Between Self-Perception and Academic Achievement Among Native Students in Grade Five and Grade Six” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my fifth and sixth grade students to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

🔱 **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **APPENDIX E**

### **LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

#### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF -PERCEPTION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG NATIVE STUDENTS IN GRADE FIVE AND GRADE SIX**

##### **Consent for Parents/Guardians of Participants**

Your child/ward is asked to participate in a research study conducted by Connie McGregor, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will lead to completion of the researcher's Thesis, fulfilling the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Connie McGregor at (519)627-4846 or contact the Faculty Supervisor, Dr. Linda McKay, at (519) 253-3000 ext.3819.

##### **# PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study is intended to examine self-perception and the relationship to academic achievement among Native students in grade five and six.

##### **# PROCEDURES**

If your child/ward volunteers to participate in this study, they will be asked to do the following things:

1. Complete a survey regarding their self-perception.
2. Allow the researcher to obtain achievement scores from their report card from last year.

Please note that if you wish to know the survey results, you must contact the researcher.

##### **# POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There are no potential risks anticipated.

## # **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR SOCIETY**

The findings of this research will help those working with Native students to develop effective educational programs that promote positive self-perception and academic achievement.

## # **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There is no payment/compensation for participation in this study.

## # **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child/ward will be kept in the strictest confidentiality and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Your child/ward's name will not be used in the data analysis.

The survey will be retained until XXX, 2004. Upon completion of the Master of Education Thesis, the researcher will shred and throw away the surveys and achievement report data.

## # **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to allow your child/ward to be in this study. If you choose to volunteer them to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences. Your child may also refuse to answer any questions that they don't want to answer and still remain in the study.

## # **FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS**

Information regarding the results of the study will be made available to the participants by contacting the researcher. A copy of the completed study will be presented to the elementary school and to the community library.

## # **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions regarding your child's rights as a research subject, contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator  
University of Windsor  
Windsor, Ontario  
N9B 3P4

Telephone: (519) 253-3000, ext. 3916  
E-mail: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca)



# **SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE**

I understand the information provided for the study "The Relationship Between Self-Perception and Academic Achievement Among Native Students in Grade Five and Grade Six" as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my child/ward to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

---

Name of Student

---

Name of Parent/Guardian

---

Signature of Parent/Guardian

---

Date# **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

---

Signature of Investigator

---

Date

## APPENDIX F

**LETTER OF INFORMATION TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF -PERCEPTION AND  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG NATIVE STUDENTS  
IN GRADE FIVE AND GRADE SIX**

**Information for Parents/Guardians of Participants**

Your child/ward is asked to participate in a research study conducted by Connie McGregor, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will lead to completion of the researcher's Thesis, fulfilling the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Connie McGregor at (519)627-4846 or contact the Faculty Supervisor, Dr. Linda McKay, at (519) 253-3000 ext.3819.

**# PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study is intended to examine self-perception and the relationship to academic achievement among Native students in grade five and six.

**# PROCEDURES**

If your child/ward volunteers to participate in this study, they will be asked to do the following things:

1. Complete a survey regarding their self-perception.
2. Allow the researcher to obtain achievement scores from their report card from last year.

Please note that if you wish to know the survey results, you must contact the researcher.

**# POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There are no potential risks anticipated.

## # **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR SOCIETY**

The findings of this research will help those working with Native students to develop effective educational programs that promote positive self-perception and academic achievement.

## # **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

There is no payment/compensation for participation in this study.

## # **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child/ward will be kept in the strictest confidentiality and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Your child/ward's name will not be used in the data analysis.

The survey will be retained until XXX, 2004. Upon completion of the Master of Education Thesis, the researcher will shred and throw away the surveys and achievement report data.

## # **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to allow your child/ward to be in this study. If you choose to volunteer them to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences. Your child may also refuse to answer any questions that they don't want to answer and still remain in the study.

## # **FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS**

Information regarding the results of the study will be made available to the participants by contacting the researcher. A copy of the completed study will be presented to the elementary school and to the community library.

## # **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions regarding your child's rights as a research subject, contact:

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Windsor, Ontario  
N9B 3P4

Telephone: (519) 253-3000, ext. 3916  
E-mail: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca)

# **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

## APPENDIX G

**Assent for Elementary School Children**

I am a student researcher, and I am doing a study on self-perception (what you are like) and student achievement (your grades). I would like to give you a survey to fill out and look at your report card from last year. Everything that I learn from you will be kept private.

When I am finished looking at the surveys and report cards from all the kids who agree to be in my study, I will write a report on what I have learned. My teachers will read it, and it might be put in a book, but no one will know who the kids are that filled out the survey or whose grades were used.

Your parents/guardians have said it is okay for me to give you the survey and to look at your report card from last year. Do you think that you would like to fill in the survey? Is it okay for me to look at your report from last year? You won't get into any trouble if you say "no." If you decide to answer the questions you can stop answering them at any time, and you don't have to answer any question you do not want to answer. It's entirely up to you.

I understand what I am being asked to do to be in this study, and I agree to be in this study.

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Signature

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Date

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WITNESS

## VITA AUTORIS

**Name:** Connie Tina McGregor  
**Date of Birth:** November 15, 1969

**Place of Birth:** Brantford, Ontario

**Education:** Brantford Collegiate Institute and Vocational School  
1987

Humber College, Toronto, Ontario  
1989 Developmental Services Worker Program

Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario  
1995 Bachelor of Arts - Native Studies/Concurrent Education

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario  
1996 Bachelor of Education

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario  
2004 Master of Education – Curriculum Studies